

## Article

## Diligence as a Value

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**Abstract:** Diligence is a value that encompasses consistent and meticulous effort toward achieving a set goal, effective time management, openness to lifelong learning, acting with a sense of responsibility, maintaining self-confidence and self-regulation, and the integration of these traits into daily life; it is influenced by achievement, biological potential, and the desire for recognition. This study aims to describe the views of primary school students regarding the value of diligence. The study employed an embedded single case study design, a qualitative research method, in which the value of diligence was examined through the analytical units of city, district, and village. Data were collected from 249 primary school students in 2nd, 3rd, and 4th grades through a semi-structured interview form, which included both written expressions and drawings. The data were analyzed using content analysis methods, including frequency analysis, categorical analysis, and contingency (relational) analysis. According to the research findings, the students' descriptions of the value of diligence were evaluated under the categories of school life, achievement, determination, socialization, time management, personal development, biological potential, external influence, internal influence, health, studying, and peer bullying. It may be recommended that these categories be taken into consideration in the education of the value of diligence.

**Keywords:** Value; Value Education; Diligence; Primary School Students

### 1. Introduction

Values, which are addressed across a wide field of study encompassing disciplines such as psychology, sociology, education, and anthropology, are principles that individuals adopt in line with their preferences, guiding them toward the goals they seek to attain and motivating them to exert effort in this direction. Values are structures that shape individuals' thinking, decision-making, and behavior, while also influencing the formation and functioning of social structures by shaping culturally shared beliefs within society [1]. Therefore, it can be stated that values have a mediating effect on individuals in the process of achieving goals and function as a source of motivation that enables individuals to attain their objectives. According to the view that defines values as personal beliefs related to a specific behavioral situation or the fundamental purpose of an individual's life [2] and establishes the relationship between values and behavior by approaching values from an individual perspective [3], values are important factors that shape individuals' attitudes and behaviors. Value, which addresses human behavior and functions as a guiding [4], is considered a standard intended to be instilled in younger generations through education, aiming to support and promote individuals' emotional, cognitive, psychological, social, and moral development [5]. The

transmission of values to younger generations is made possible through values education.

Values education, which is expected to be provided at every stage of life and in every environment, is of great importance in terms of individuals recognizing values, internalizing them, and translating them into action. Indeed, values education is an integral part of academic life, serving as a purposeful initiative aimed at teaching what is right and wrong [6]. In addition, it is possible for individuals to sustain their lives in harmony with society teaching values to individuals or by learning values [7]. Indeed, values education ensures individuals' socialization, active participation in social life, and their adoption of the culture of society and integration with it [8]. In this sense, values education can be evaluated on philosophical, individual, social, and cultural grounds [9]. The philosophical foundations of values stem from their concern not with what is, but with what ought to be—that is, from their expression of moral imperatives [10]. The fact that values influence the attitudes, behaviors, and emotions that individuals possess regarding possible events and outcomes constitutes the individual foundation of values education [11]. Within this framework, the social foundations of values education stem from its nature as a multifaceted socialization process in which dominant values are transmitted to establish the necessary connection between the individual, the group, and society, as well as from its role in constructing social identity [12,13]. Finally, the cultural foundations of values education are that culture consists of values and symbols, and that values form the core of culture as its most fundamental element [14]. Taylor [15] states that value education encourages individuals to reflect on their choices, explore opportunities, and develop a commitment to fulfilling their responsibilities, and that this process helps individuals acquire values and understanding that will guide their attitudes and behaviors within society. Ultimately, values education is shaped in an interrelated manner around the axes of the individual, society, culture, ethics, and philosophy. In this way, it supports individuals' personal development, ensures their socialization, equips them with the ability to distinguish between good and evil, right and wrong, and shows them ways of thinking. With these multifaceted functions, values education plays a critical role in the preservation of values at both the individual and societal levels and in their transmission from generation to generation.

For the continuity of institutions, identities, and structures, values must be transmitted within both historical and contemporary contexts [16]. Schools are places that help students develop their values, where teachers serve as key facilitators of values education [17,18]. This process, which is carried out in schools under the guidance of teachers, is realized through different courses and students are encouraged to adopt values. When the development of values education around the world is examined, it can be said that it exists in almost all societies. In this context, it can be stated that values education is present in educational systems around the world and that various studies on values education have been conducted. Reflections of values education around the world can be observed in different forms across various countries: in Australia, it is considered important at all educational levels; in China, it is placed at the center of the curriculum; in the Netherlands, it is regarded as an integral part of the education system; in Germany, it is delivered both explicitly and implicitly; in New Zealand, it holds a significant place in the curriculum; in Singapore, teachers play a critical role in values education; in Sweden, the child's immediate environment plays an influential role; and in India, it has been observed that children who receive values education show improvements in both academic and social achievement [19]. In the context of values education in Türkiye, it is stated that values education is most frequently incorporated into the courses of life science, social studies, Turkish, science, and religious culture and moral knowledge [20–24]. Among these courses, it can be said that life science and social studies courses, which are more related to the students themselves, their social and natural environment and culture, have a special place in values education. Indeed, values are fundamentally shaped by the way of life and culture of the society in which an individual lives, and since the life science course reflects life itself, this shared characteristic gives values education within the course a significant dimension [25]. For this reason, the content of the life science course is imbued with values [26]. Similarly, due to the role of values in societal development and in establishing relationships among individuals, social studies—which is inherently intertwined with values—plays a crucial role in the transmission of values [27,28].

The aim of value education is for individuals to develop an awareness of values and to gain a deep understanding of how to live in a way that contributes to the process of creating a better world [29]. This understanding is essential for nurturing a compassionate and selfless future generation capable of contributing to society [30]. Each value that is intended to be instilled in individuals through values education has its own unique importance and contribution. One of these values is the value of diligence, which enables individuals to be aware of their responsibilities and to fulfill their duties in contributing to social life. A review of the literature indicates that this value is

described as a fundamental value to be acquired, and one of the most important values as perceived by teachers, students, and parents [31–33]. Diligence means taking on a small part of a task, performing it with care, observing the effort and the impact, and appreciating small efforts and effects with pleasure [34]. In addition, diligence can be defined as a relatively stable tendency that reflects an individual's positive attitude towards work, their determination to complete tasks, and their willingness to overcome difficulties [35]. In this context, it can be said that the value of diligence has a special importance in terms of individuals contributing to the progress of society by improving themselves and that individuals who embrace this value will contribute to social development by tasting the sense of individual success.

When the literature on the value of diligence is examined, studies can be found on common features related to the value of diligence in Turkish and Kyrgyz proverbs [36], the conceptualization of the value of diligence in Malay and Tamil proverbs [37], the value of diligence in children's books [38], the effects of values education on students' diligence [39], and the acquisition of various values, including the value of diligence, by creative drama [40]. Although studies on values education include the value of diligence, it is observed that there are very few studies directly focusing on the value of diligence. Although studies on values education include the value of diligence, it is observed that there are very few studies directly focusing on the value of diligence. The value of diligence encompasses being disciplined, planned and consistent, giving importance to science, having internal motivation and self-control, lifelong learning, and assuming duties and responsibilities [41]. Individuals who possess these characteristics are expected to be self-actualized, productive individuals who can actively contribute to national and global society. For this reason, the place that the value of diligence has in students' lives and the way students perceive this value may affect their becoming individuals with the value of diligence and may be decisive on how they will spend their future lives and what kind of role they will assume in society. Therefore, since children's diligence in their future lives and the attitudes they develop towards work are formed and nurtured in the primary school years [42], it was deemed necessary to investigate the views of primary school students on the value of diligence and this situation was determined as a problem. Accordingly, the aim of the study is to explore the views and perceptions of primary school students towards the value of diligence. Answers to the following problems were sought in the research:

1. According to primary school students, what does the value of diligence mean?
2. According to primary school students, what are the characteristics of a diligent person?
3. According to primary school students, what does a diligent person do?
4. According to primary school students, how does being diligent change a person's life?
5. How have primary school students illustrated the value of diligence?
6. What are the relationships between the codes derived from primary school students' views on the value of diligence?

## 2. Materials and Methods

### 2.1. Research Design

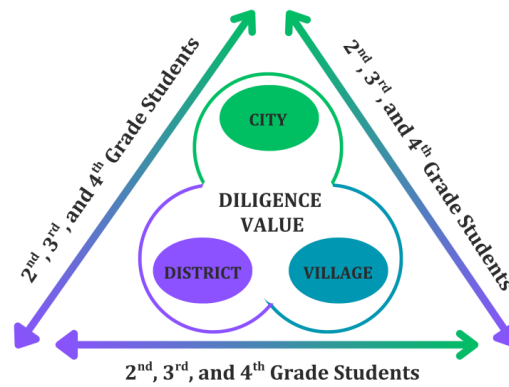
This research was designed using the case study pattern from qualitative research methods and conducted using the embedded single case pattern from case study types. The embedded single case design is a research pattern in which multiple sub-units or sub-layer within a single case are examined, and findings obtained from these sub-units are used to draw conclusions about the case as a whole [43]. In the study, the value of diligence was considered as a case, and the units of analysis were defined as students studying in city, district, and village settings. It is anticipated that a detailed examination of the data collected from these units of analysis will provide a comprehensive understanding of the research fact. In this regard, the data obtained from each unit of analysis were evaluated separately, and based on these evaluations, general conclusions regarding the research fact were sought. The research design is shown in **Figure 1**.

### 2.2. Study Group

This research was conducted with primary school students studying in Kırşehir province during the second semester of the 2024–2025 academic year. Maximum variation sampling, one of the purposive sampling methods, was used to determine the study group. The aim of maximum variation sampling is to select samples that are

as different from one another as possible after identifying the key dimensions of the situations [44]. In order to reveal different situations related to the value of diligence, students studying in different locations (city, district, and village) and different grade levels (2nd, 3rd, and 4th grade) were included in the sample in the conducted research. Moreover, maximum variation aims to identify and describe core themes that encompass a range of differences [45]. Therefore, students studying in city, district, and village were included in the study group to capture themes arising from their descriptions of the value of diligence, and the results were discussed within this framework.

When forming the study group for the research, primary schools in Kırşehir province were listed according to their location as city center, district center, and village, and the schools were selected using a simple random sampling method. First-grade students in the selected schools were not included in the study due to their lack of reading and writing skills, and one class from each of the 2nd, 3rd, and 4th grades was selected. In addition, attention was paid to selecting a comparable number of participants from both different grade levels and different residential areas. The study group is presented in detail in **Table 1**.



**Figure 1.** Embedded single case design.

**Table 1.** Information on the students participating in the study.

Grade Level	City	District	Village	Total
2 <sup>nd</sup> Grade	21	27	28	76
3 <sup>rd</sup> Grade	29	27	33	89
4 <sup>th</sup> Grade	34	30	20	84
Total	84	84	81	249

### 2.3. Data Collection Tool

The data was collected using the “Diligence Value Data Collection Form” developed by the researchers. The initial draft of the form was composed of open-ended questions prepared in line with the objectives of the study. Expert opinion was sought to ensure the content validity of the data collection instrument designed by the researchers. The appropriateness, clarity, and comprehensiveness of each question were evaluated by experts in the field of three social studies and three primary school education. Inter-rater reliability was analyzed using Fleiss’s Kappa coefficient. The Kappa value of 0.88 obtained was interpreted as near-perfect agreement [46] and confirmed the validity of the instrument. Based on the feedback obtained from expert evaluations, necessary adjustments were made, and a semi-structured data collection instrument consisting of five open-ended questions was developed. The questions in the form are as follows:

1. What does it mean to be diligent in your opinion?
2. What do you think are the characteristics of a diligent person?
3. What do you think a diligent person does? Can you give an example?
4. Think of a story: What could change in a person’s life because they are diligent? Can you tell their story?
5. Can you express what comes to your mind when you think of ‘diligence’ through a drawing?

## 2.4. Data Collection Process

The data collection form was applied to the working group after the necessary permissions were obtained. The application process was carried out in collaboration with researchers and primary school teachers. Researchers explained the purpose and scope of the study to students in the classrooms where they conducted the application and informed them that the data collected would not be used for personal evaluation purposes, but only for scientific research. Data was collected from participants in writing. The data collection process was completed within one week for each settlement type—city, district, and village—and the administration of the form took one class period.

## 2.5. Data Analysis

The data were transferred to the MAXQDA 24 program, and data analysis was performed using this program. Inductive content analysis was used in the analysis of the research data. Inductive content analysis, in which findings emerge from the data through the researcher's interaction with the data, can be thought of as a discussion between the researcher and the data [45,47]. The data in question may be written, visual, and audio-verbal [48,49]. In the study, the written and visual responses given by the students to the questions were read and examined independently by the researchers, meanings were derived from the statements, and codes were created. In other words, the open coding method was used. The consistency between the researchers' individual codings was calculated using Fleiss's Kappa coefficient, which yielded a value of 0.92. According to Landis and Koch [46], this value indicates an almost perfect level of agreement. Qualitative content analysis refers to the identification and counting of categories and codes present in the text [50]. After creating codes in the study, categorization was performed using categorical analysis, one of the content analysis techniques. At the same time, the process was carried out in conjunction with frequency analysis by determining the frequency of repetition of codes and categories. After codes and categories were generated for all questions in the data collection instrument, it was considered meaningful to reveal the relationships among students' statements related to the value of diligence in order to uncover their mental associations regarding this value. Therefore, beyond merely defining categories and subcategories, relational probability analysis aimed at examining the connections and interrelationships among categories [51] was conducted using the Code Co-occurrence tool in the MAXQDA software. The most frequently occurring codes were determined from the students' statements about diligence. Thus, the students' mental construction of the value of diligence and the ways in which they establish intellectual relationships between statements about diligence were evaluated.

The findings obtained through content analysis are presented in figures. Examples of students' statements are included to support the analyses conducted by the researchers. These quotations are presented with codes assigned to the students as C-3-12, D-4-19, and V-2-28. In this coding system, the letters C (city), D (district), and V (village) indicate the location of the schools, the numbers 2, 3, and 4 indicate the grade level of the student, and the numbers at the end indicate the order of review within the grade level. In addition, the frequencies given in parentheses in the categories and subcategories in the figures express the total of city, district and village, while the reds in the frequencies under the codes express the frequency of student opinions in the city, blues in the district and greens in the village. While creating the figures, an artificial intelligence tool (Canva AI) was used through the MAXQDA program outputs.

## 2.6. Trustworthiness

In ensuring trustworthiness in case studies, it is important for researchers to record the research processes in as much detail as possible [43]. In this study, conducted as an embedded case study, the criteria of credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability proposed by Lincoln and Guba [52] were adopted to ensure trustworthiness. In this direction, the practices carried out during the research process were tried to be explained in detail in order to ensure trustworthiness. Among the strategies that can be used to ensure credibility, which is the first criterion of trustworthiness, are expert review and member checking [53]. Expert review refers to the process of evaluating feedback received from experts and minimizing the researcher's biases [54]. For this purpose, an academic was selected who holds a bachelor's degree in primary school teaching, has experience in classroom teaching, and focuses on qualitative research and values education in their academic work. The expert provided feedback throughout the research process, including the determination of the method, data collection, data analysis,

and presentation of the findings, allowing the study to be evaluated from different perspectives. Member checking is the process of strengthening the validity of a study by presenting transcripts to participants in order to verify the accuracy of the data [55]. In the study, member checking was conducted by presenting the findings to six randomly selected students after data collection, in order to verify the accuracy of the results. Transferability, one of the four criteria of trustworthiness, refers to the applicability of the research; in other words, it is related to the extent to which research findings can be transferred to different settings or participants [52]. Ensuring transferability requires a detailed description of the research context, participants and methods used, and a clear specification of sampling methods and participant selection criteria [56]. Indeed, the environment in which the research took place, the profiles of the participants, the methods used during the research process are presented in detail, and how the individuals participating in the research were selected and which criteria were taken into consideration are clearly stated in the methodology section. Dependability in research refers to the extent to which research methods and processes can be consistently replicated and similarly carried out by others [57]. Therefore, in order to ensure dependability in the study, the data analysis process was explained in detail, the analyses were presented transparently with consideration of their replicability, and the findings obtained were examined using a comparative approach. The final criterion for ensuring trustworthiness is confirmability. Confirmability indicates the extent to which the findings of a qualitative study are based on the experiences and statements of the participants, rather than on the subjective judgments of the researcher [58]. In this context, the data were independently analyzed by the researchers, and potential codes were determined through open coding method. The researchers who carried out the coding process then came together and created common codes. Therefore, consistency was ensured in the analysis of the research data through agreement among the researchers who conducted the coding process. In addition, taking into account the views of other researchers throughout the research process and presenting the findings in a clear report also supported confirmability.

### 3. Results

The findings of the study, which examined the views of 2nd, 3rd, and 4th grade primary school students studying in the city, district, and village regarding the value of diligence, are presented under the themes of what diligence means, what a diligent person is like, what a diligent person does, how being diligent can change a person's life, how what comes to mind when thinking of diligence is reflected in drawings, and the relationships among the codes generated regarding the value of diligence.

#### 3.1. Findings on What Diligence Means

The codes and categories obtained from primary school students' views on what it means to be diligent are presented in **Figure 2** with their frequencies.

When **Figure 2** is examined, it is seen that primary school students explained diligence with the codes evaluated in the categories of school life, achievement, determination, socialization, time management, personal development, biological potential, external influence, internal influence, and health. Examples of primary school students' views regarding the meaning of the value of diligence are as follows:

School Life: C-3-26: *"Working hard means repeating the subject matter and studying well..."*, D-3-8: *"Someone who listens well in class is called hardworking."*

Achievement: D-4-3: *"...Getting good grades on your report card, studying your lessons, getting good marks on tests, finishing a question in a minute..."*

Determination: V-2-28: *"It means striving to achieve your goals."*, D-4-2: *"Working continuously."*, D-4-14: *"...showing determination, not giving up..."*

Socialization: V-4-7: *"Be hardworking. Be helpful. Be a good person. Help the elderly. Don't skip classes. Be patriotic. Don't be selfish. Get along well with our friends."*

Time Management: D-2-6: *"...not wasting our time, being organized..."*, C-4-1: *"...going to bed early and getting up early."*, V-2-2: *"Studying for classes in an organized manner."*

Personal Development: V-2-24: *"Acquiring new knowledge."*, V-3-12: *"...developing your brain..."*

Biological Potential: D-3-8: *“Using one’s brain more effectively and studying very well...”*

External Influence: D-4-8: *“To get into the teachers’ good graces.”*, V-3-8: *“...to listen to our teacher’s words.”*

Internal Influence: V-3-5: *“...doing the task assigned. Plowing the field.”*, V-4-5: *“Being happy.”*

Health: C-4-31: *“Eating regularly, going to bed early...”*, D-3-23: *“Not looking at your tablet or phone.”*

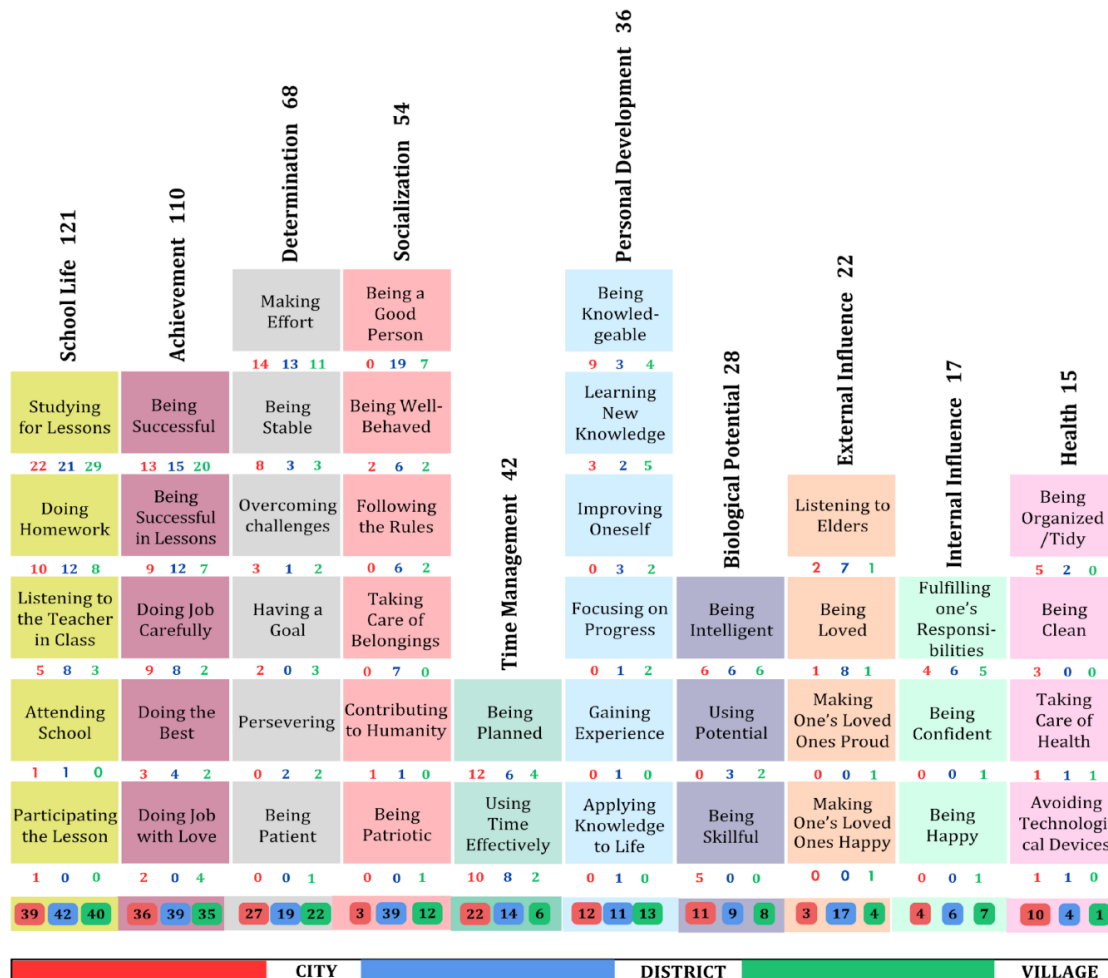


Figure 2. Primary school students' views on what diligence means.

### 3.2. Findings Related to the Characteristics of a Diligent Person

The codes and categories obtained from primary school students' views on the characteristics of a diligent person are presented in Figure 3 with their frequencies.

Figure 3 suggests that primary school students explained the characteristics of a hardworking person with the codes evaluated under the categories of socialization, internal influence, success, personal development, health, time management, determination, biological potential, school life, and external influence. Examples of primary school students' views on the characteristics of a diligent person are as follows:

Socialization: D-3-13: *“Never steal, be respectful and loving towards your teacher, mother, father, and sister, listen to what you are told, and behave yourself.”*, V-4-2: *“Be helpful...”*

Internal Influence: V-2-4: *“Hardworking students have high self-confidence...”*, D-2-1: *“They do their homework without their mother telling them to...”*, V-2-2: *“They are responsible.”*

Achievement: C-4-30: *“He can answer questions quickly when asked to do something fast.”*, D-2-9: *“He is successful at school...”*, V-3-33: *“We can do everything: math, Turkish, life skills, science, all subjects...”*

Personal Development: V-2-1: "They are open to continuous learning and development.", C-3-5: "...they are knowledgeable.", D-2-3: "Hardworking people play with technological devices less. They read books and play board games, that is, they do things that will help them develop themselves..."

Health: D-4-23: "Being clean means taking a bath once a week, brushing your teeth, keeping your bag clean, wearing clean clothes, not littering, throwing trash in the trash can, eating healthy, and washing your hands and face in the morning."

Time Management: C-4-10: "...It is planned. He can devote time to himself and his family..."

Determination: V-2-5: "Challenges and obstacles do not discourage them; they motivate them."

Biological Potential: C-4-13: "Thinks intelligently in games, considers what might happen, and predicts the future."

School Life: D-2-9: "...He likes school. He likes his teachers very much.", C-4-21: "...listening to his teacher well."

External Influence: C-3-13: "I participate in group activities and divide tasks within the group."

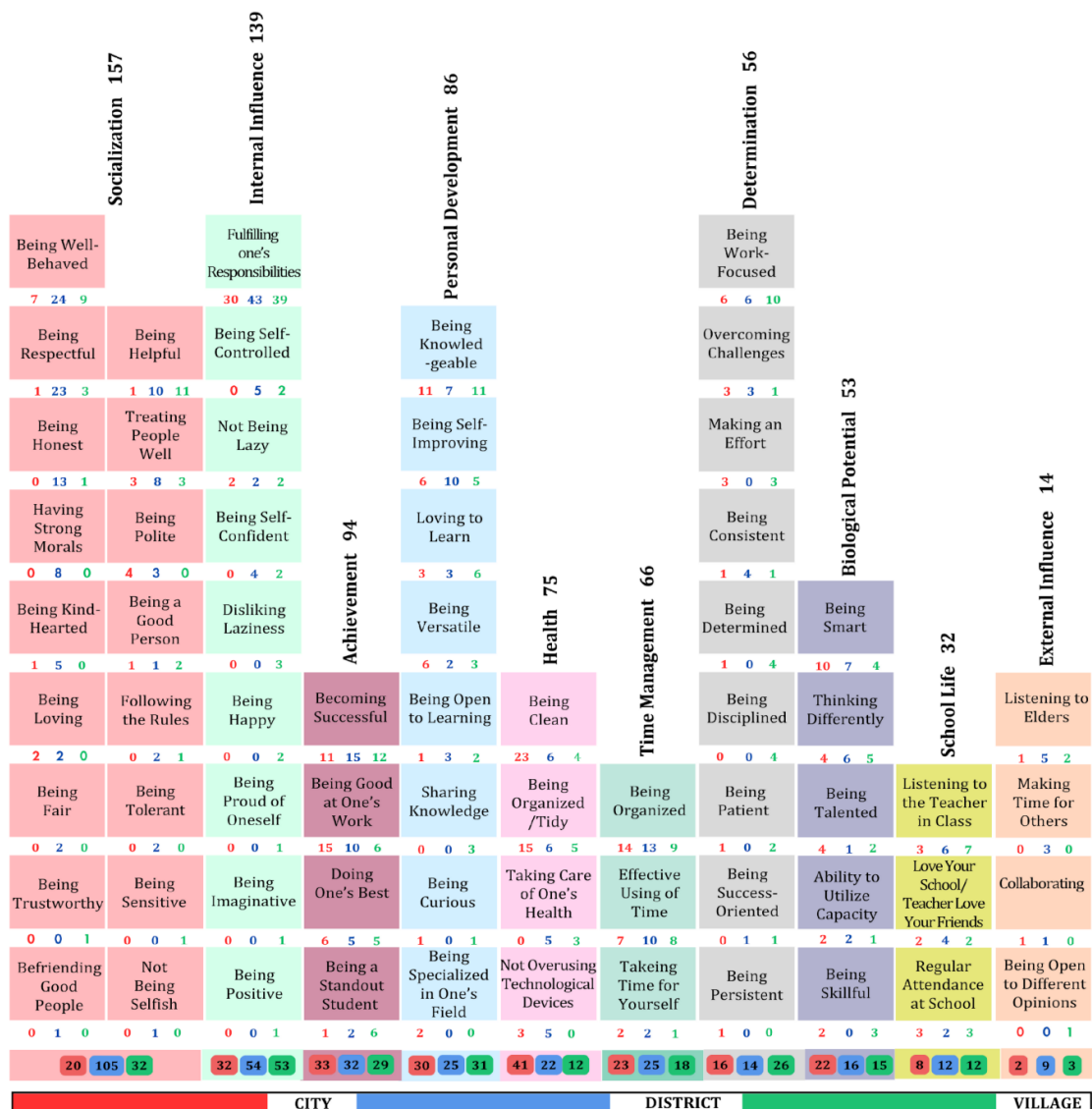


Figure 3. Primary school students' views on the characteristics of a diligent person.

### 3.3. Findings Related to What a Diligent Person Does

In the third question of the study, students were asked to explain with examples what a diligent person does. The codes and categories created from primary school students' views on what a hardworking person does are presented in Figure 4.

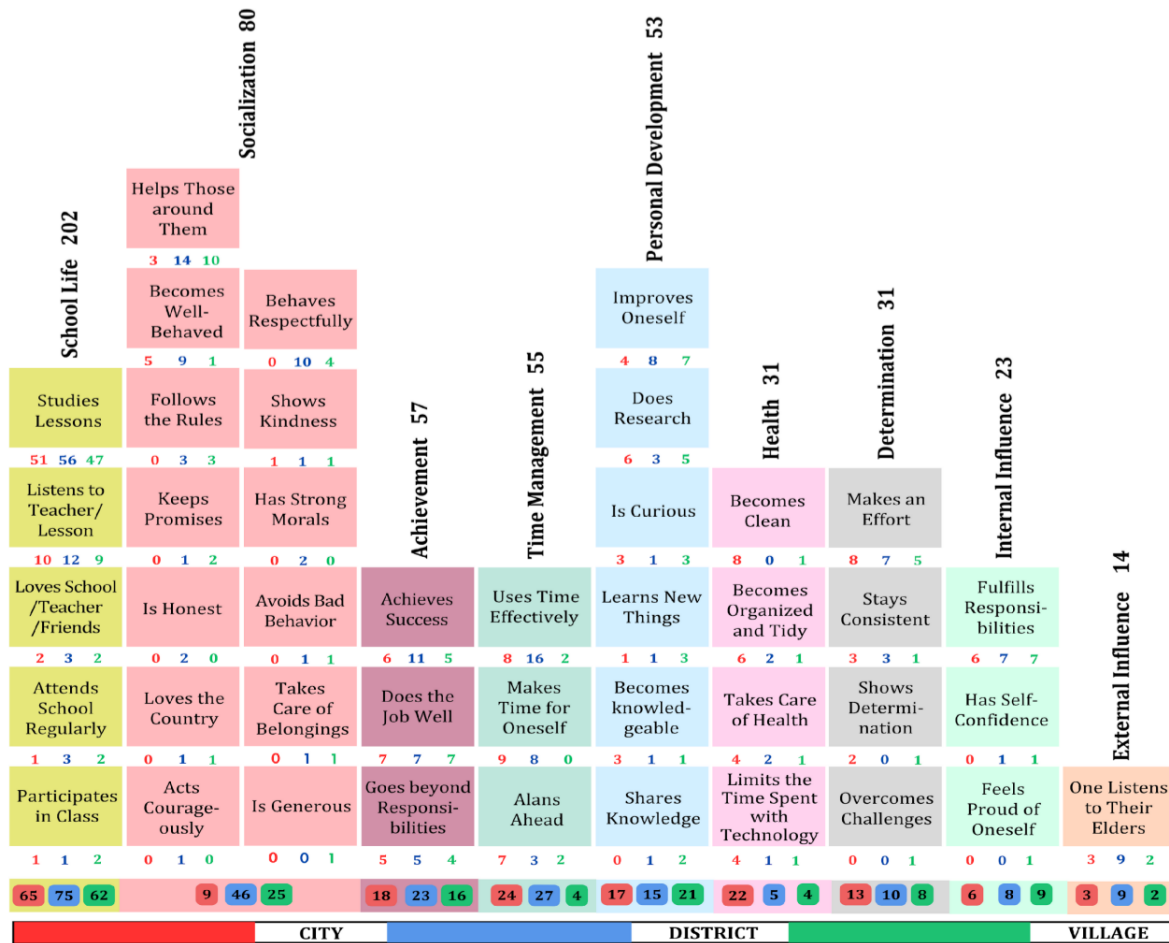


Figure 4. Primary school students' views on what a diligent person does.

When Figure 4 is examined, it is seen that primary school students explain what a hardworking person does with codes evaluated in the categories of school life, socialization, achievement, time management, personal development, health, determination, internal influence, and external influence. Examples of students' views regarding what a diligent person does are as follows:

School Life: D-4-12: "When they finish their homework, they read books, take tests, and repeat what they have done."

Socialization: C-2-16: "They should know their own anthem.", D-4-19: "...they do not litter, they do not upset their teachers, they do not use bad language, they keep school property clean..."

Achievement: C-3-10: "He works hard, succeeds, and does everything.", D-2-5: "He reads books regularly every day. During summer vacation, he does his own homework because his teacher does not give him any."

Time Management: C-4-12: "A hardworking person does their homework when they get home, then reads their book, then reviews what they learned at school, and wakes up on time."

Personal Development: V-3-31: "He is curious. He asks questions because he is curious.", V-2-1: "He constantly improves himself. For example, he learns new programs on the computer."

Health: D-2-22: "He never looks at his phone, tablet, television, or computer."

Determination: D-3-20: "He tries to succeed, he tries to win. He learns what life means."

Internal Influence: V-3-18: "I can do anything, and I'm proud of myself."

External Influence: C-2-7: "Listens to the teacher.", D-3-12: "...listens to his mother and father."

### 3.4. Findings on How Being Diligent Can Change a Person's Life

Another problem of the research is about what can change in a person's life because he/she is diligent. The codes and categories created in line with the opinions of primary school students for this problem are presented in Figure 5.

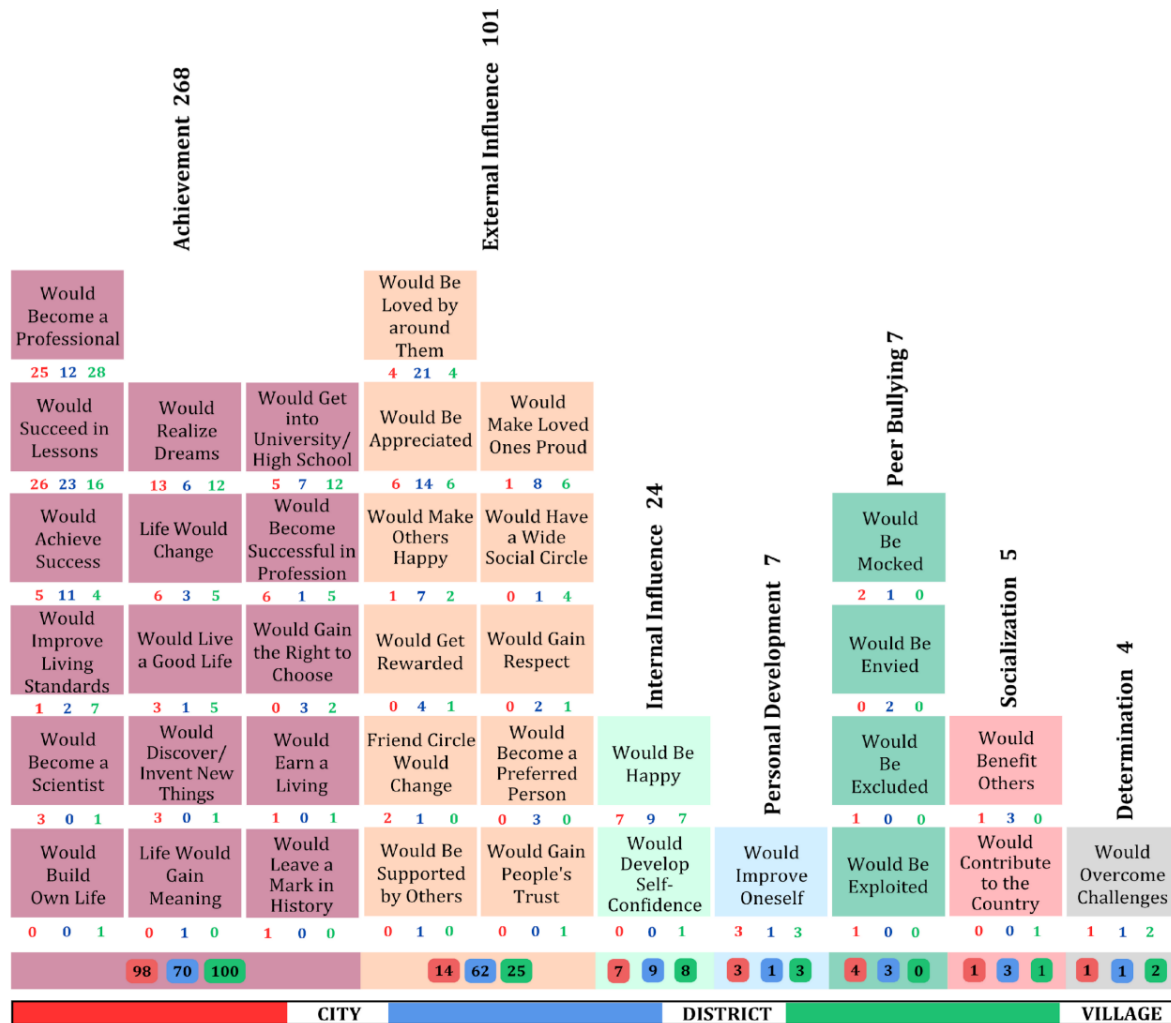


Figure 5. Primary school students' views on what can change in a person's life due to diligence.

According to Figure 5, primary school students explained what can change in the life of a diligent person using codes evaluated under the categories of achievement, external influence, internal influence, personal development, peer bullying, socialization, and determination. Examples of primary school students' views on what can change in the life of a diligent person are as follows:

Achievement: V-3-4: "There was a girl who was very hardworking. When she grew up, she wanted to be a mechanical engineer. She grew up, graduated from university, and became a mechanical engineer, just as she had dreamed. She was very successful in her job.", D-3-5: "...When she gets a job, she will earn good

money...”

External Influence: D-4-3: “...his mom and dad love him a lot, are proud of him, and get him whatever he wants...”, D-4-8: “Our friends always hang out with us because we’re hardworking. We’re hardworking, so we write well and our teacher likes us.”, V-2-12: “I’ll have more friends.”

Internal Influence: C-4-18: “...One morning when I woke up, I wanted to get my life in order and become hardworking. I immediately made a weekly plan on a piece of paper. After that plan, everything changed. My friends, my classes, my happiness. I really loved this hardworking attitude!”

Personal Development: V-2-1: “Hardworking Mete plays sports in his spare time and researches computer programs. This allows him to learn new things and teach them to his teachers and friends.”, C-3-14: “...the lazy ones stay behind, while the hardworking ones move forward.”

Peer Bullying: C-3-22: “...Sometimes people use it, and sometimes they make fun of it for being hardworking.”

Socialization: C-4-5: “...When he grew up, he became a doctor who was useful to his country.”, C-4-4: “...and he showed us how to be hardworking.”

Determination: V-4-2: “...We live in a small village. My father died. Even though my mother’s budget is low, I study very hard for my classes.”

### 3.5. Findings Regarding the Reflection of Characteristics Associated with Diligence in Pictures

According to **Table 2**, the visual representations and written expressions in the drawings made by primary school students about what comes to mind when thinking of diligence fall within the categories of studying, school life, achievement, working at work, contrasts related to diligence, biological potential, socialization, and peer bullying. Furthermore, the category of studying includes sub-categories of study materials and the study room and its contents, while the school life category comprises the school and its components. Examples of primary school students’ visual reflections of what diligence evokes are presented below (**Figures 6 and 7**).

**Table 2.** Visual and written expressions are used in the drawings.

	Categories	Sub-Categories	Codes	C	D	V
				f	f	f
Visual Expressions	Studying (392)	Study Room (68) and Contents (238)	Desk, Book, Pencil, Bookcase, Notebook, Eraser, Pencil Case, Reading Lamp, Student, Schoolbag, Computer, Turkish Flag, Magazine, Poster, Internet Connectivity, Pencil Sharpener, Game Console	132	166	94
		Course Materials (86)	Book, Pencil, Notebook, Pencil Case, Eraser, Bookcase, Adhesive/Tape, Ruler, Pencil Sharpener, Eyeglasses, Compass, Clippers, Test, Blackboard			
Written Expressions	Studying (69)	Course Materials (38)	Book, Number/Operation/Alphabet, Pencil, Adhesive/Tape, Pencil Case, Bookcase, Notebook, Clippers, Eraser, Ruler, Pencil Sharpener	24	33	12
		Study Room and Contents (31)	Study, Book, Do Homework, Bookcase, Notebook, Read a Book, Eraser, Number/Operation/Alphabet, Poster, Student, Pencil Sharpener, Schoolbag			
Visual Expressions	School Life (297)	School (72) and Contents (225)	Student, Desk, Book, Pencil, Teacher’s Table, Pencil Case, Map, Pencil Sharpener, Blackboard, Teacher, Notebook, Eraser, Turkish Flag, Bookcase, Ataturk Bust	124	88	85
Written Expressions	School Life (60)	School (17) and Contents (43)	Number/Operation/Alphabet, Book, Teacher, Study, Student, Do Homework, Program, Map, Blackboard, Classroom, Teacher’s Table, Pencil Case, Eraser, Pencil	29	21	10
Visual Expressions	Achievement (32)		Certificate of Achievement, Decoration, House, Check, Halter, Invention, Scientists, Be Appreciated, Rostrum, University, Ataturk Bust, Car	12	14	6

Table 2. Cont.

	Categories	Sub-Categories	Codes	C	D	V
				f	f	f
Written Expressions	Achievement (54)		100 points, Diligence, Well Done, I Read a Lot of Books, Scholar, Student Preparing for University Entrance Exams, Excellent, Medical School Accepted, Scientists, Certificate of Achievement, I Worked Very Hard, Being a Star Student, How Did You Come First?, My Classes are Great, Hurray, I did it!, Becoming a Professional, Being Diligent is Essential, I am a Very Hardworking, Diligent Beautiful Person, You Got it Right!, The Life of Mustafa Kemal Atatürk, Invention	25	20	9
Visual Expressions	Working at Work (22)		Bee, Tractor, Construction, Chef, Science Laboratory, Factory Worker, Soccer Ball, Piano, Construction Worker, Apiarist, Concrete Mixer, Factory, Child Playing Soccer, Ring, Police Car	0	0	22
Written Expressions	Working at Work (12)		Construction Worker, Science World, Science Center, Robot Factory, Tractor, Ring, Police	0	0	12
Visual Expressions	Contrasts Related to Diligence (5)		Diligence/Laziness, Tidy/Untidy, Happy/Sad	1	3	1
Written Expressions	Contrasts Related to Diligence (6)		Richness/Poverty, Kindness/Evil, Diligence/Laziness, Tidy/Untidy	0	6	0
Visual Expressions	Socialization (3)		Patriotism, Contributing to the World	1	0	2
Written Expressions	Socialization (2)		Being Smart/Well-Behaved	2	0	0
Visual Expressions	Biological Potential (1)		Being Intelligent	1	0	0
Written Expressions	Biological Potential (2)		Smart, Intelligent	0	1	1
Visual Expressions	Peer Bullying (1)		Being Mocked	1	0	0
Written Expressions	Peer Bullying (1)		Being Mocked	1	0	0

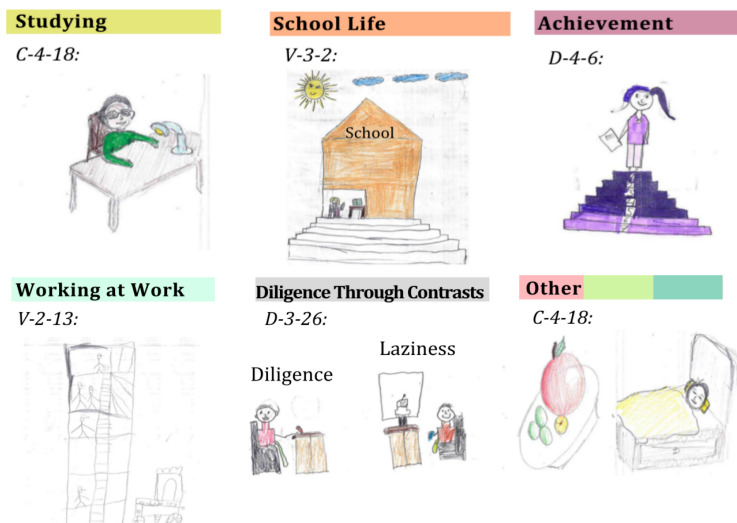


Figure 6. Imaged Used.

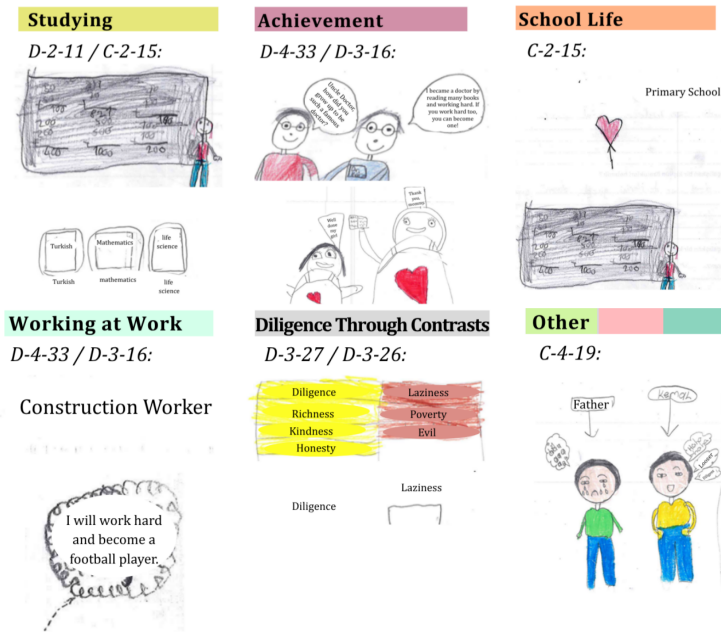


Figure 7. Written Text.

### 3.6. Findings Related to the Relationships between Codes Created Based on Primary School Students' Views on the Value of Diligence

Finally, the relationships between the codes (frequencies of co-occurrence) generated from primary school students' views on the value of diligence were questioned. The relationships between the codes generated from student opinions are presented in Figure 8.

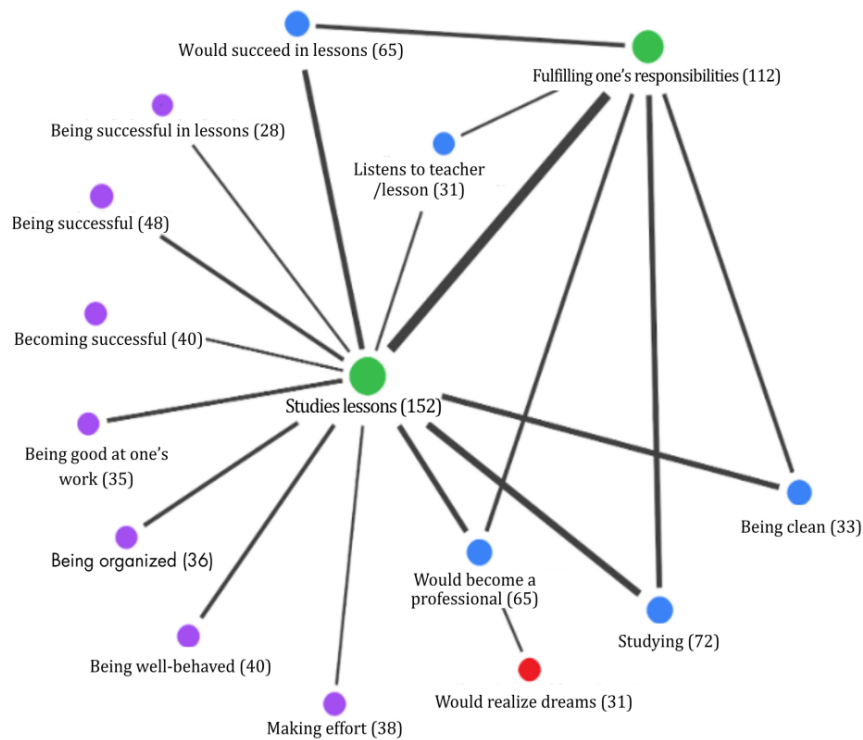


Figure 8. Relationships between codes created based on primary school students' views on diligence.

The analysis conducted in **Figure 8** reveals the relationship between the codes created based on primary school students' views on diligence. In this regard, the codes related to study lessons and fulfilling one's responsibilities appear to occupy a central position and are interconnected with each other as well as with other codes. A strong relationship has emerged between the code for studies lessons and the code for fulfilling one's responsibilities. These codes are related to studying, would succeed in lessons, would become a professional, being clean, and listening to teacher/lessons. It has been determined that the percentage of people who would realize dreams using the code to become a professional within the specified codes is also high. However, it has also been associated with codes such as, being successful, becoming successful, being well-behaved, making effort, being organized, being good at one's work, and being successful in lessons.

#### 4. Discussion and Conclusions

In this study, the views of primary school students studying in the city, district and village on the value of diligence were examined. The research investigates how students define diligence, which personality traits they associate with diligent individuals, their thoughts on what a diligent person does, how they think being diligent can change a person's life, how they visualize diligence, and the relationships among the codes generated regarding the value of diligence.

According to the research findings, primary school students defined diligence through expressions that fall into the categories of school life, achievement, determination, socialization, time management, personal development, biological potential, external influence, internal influence, and health. In the statements of primary school students regarding school life, diligence is associated with academic activities such as studying for lessons, doing homework, listening to the teacher in class, attending school, and participating in lessons, as well as with behaviors such as in-class participation and adherence to school order. This situation can be interpreted as students identifying diligence with their own identities, that is, with their roles as students. At the same time, they also explained diligence in relation to achievement, in parallel with their statements under the category of school life, and described it as being successful in lessons. The sentence of the student coded D-4-3: "...Getting good grades on your report card, studying your lessons, getting good marks on tests, finishing a question in a minute..." can be given as an example for this situation. Almoslamani [59] emphasized that, when employed with diligence, learning strategies serve as a significant predictor of students' academic achievement and have a substantial impact on their academic performance, and Kember et al. [60] emphasize that although adopting an in-depth learning approach is important, it does not guarantee success and that diligence is still an indispensable factor to achieve success. Therefore, there is a relationship between studying the lessons including the use of study strategies and students' achievement, and diligence is indispensable for success. Other codes in the achievement category are being successful, doing a job carefully, doing the best and doing a job with love. The fact that students express diligence with achievement may be an indication that they see diligence as a basic condition for achieving academic success. This association, which reveals that students perceive diligence not only as a character trait but also as a means to achieve academic goals, can also be interpreted as a reflection of the importance attributed to academic performance in today's educational context. A student with high diligence would most likely tend to have high academic performance. There is a consistent trend that shows that as students become more diligent their academic performance tends to improve [61]; that as diligence affects their academic performance [62]; and that diligence is critically important for achieving success both inside and outside the classroom [63]. The findings of previous studies support the views expressed by students in the present study regarding the value of diligence. For instance, parents' statements such as "no success is a coincidence; behind every achievement lies hard work" [64], and students' association of diligence with effort, perseverance, continuous pursuit of goals, intrinsic motivation and personal development are consistent with the findings of this research [65] align with the perspectives revealed in this research.

Students' diligence is also considered in terms of various dimensions such as determination, socialization, time management, personal development, biological potential, external influence, internal influence, and health. The way 5th grade primary school students define the value of diligence in their journals as taking responsibility for learning, fulfilling assigned tasks, being committed to school, being determined, and using time effectively [32] is considered to be consistent with the description of diligence provided by the Ministry of National Education [41], which includes being disciplined, planned, and consistent, valuing scientific knowledge, possessing intrinsic motivation and self-regulation, engaging in lifelong learning, and assuming duties and responsibilities, and these qualities align with

the categories of determination, socialization, time management, personal development, and internal influence identified in this study. The value of diligence is defined as a continuous endeavor to raise one's academic performance by consistent, persistent work, self-control, and time management [66]. The expressions used by primary school students to describe diligence such as "having a goal, doing job carefully, making an effort, being planned, using time effectively, learning new knowledge, fulfilling one's responsibilities, being confident, being successful, being intelligent, and making one's loved ones proud" are consistent with the definitions of diligence presented in the literature.

Primary school students described the characteristics of a diligent person using codes evaluated in the categories of socialization, internal influence, achievement, personal development, health, time management, determination, biological potential, school life, and external influence. In these categories, the characteristics that students put forward to describe a hard-working person, such as being honest, respectful, tolerant, fulfilling one's responsibilities, being clean, taking care of one's health, being determined, being self-confident, being helpful, and obeying rules, coincide with the qualities that teachers look for in an ideal student [67,68]. This situation indicates that primary school students also perceive a diligent person as an ideal student. Supporting this, while diligence is expected to contribute to students' achievement motivation and academic outcomes, it is also suggested that honesty and self-preservation enhance well-being [65]. It is understood that students emphasize socialization and internal influence when describing the characteristics of a diligent person. Simmel [69] states that seeking and giving help, love and hate, greed and pleasure in social relationships, self-preservation through competition on the one hand and union on the other, and a series of other primary psychic phenomena involve socialization, and thus socialization can be understood as the relationships individuals maintain with group units and the process of group formation. Primary school students described the characteristics of a diligent person as being intelligent, well-behaved, respectful, helpful, moral, polite, kind-hearted, a good person, loving, fair, tolerant, trustworthy, and sensitive, as well as not being selfish and obeying rules and treating people well. These statements express both the diligent person's group relationships and what they need to consider in maintaining these relationships. It can be said that these descriptions by the students are supported by Simmel's [69] discourse on socialization. In other words, according to the students, a diligent person is someone who possesses characteristics suitable for the socialization process and maintains these characteristics in group relationships.

Fulfilling responsibilities, being self-disciplined, and having self-confidence represent the dimension of internal influence, which is another aspect primary school students use to describe a diligent person. The association made by middle school students between diligence and responsibility [70], as well as the inclusion of intrinsic motivation, self-regulation, and assuming duties and responsibilities within the value of diligence [41], are consistent with the findings of this study. In addition, according to Harjula [71], diligence and work are important elements of a good life in Meru proverbs. In these proverbs, diligence and work are explained in relation to concepts such as perseverance, resilience, quality work, self-confidence, cooperation, acting quickly instead of procrastinating, and not postponing work. In describing the diligence of primary school students, expressions such as persevering, being patient, overcoming challenges, doing the best, being confident, using time effectively, being planned, and fulfilling one's responsibilities are parallel to descriptions of diligence and work in Meru proverbs.

The common characteristics of the diligent person model in Turkish and Kyrgyz proverbs are as follows: being skilled and talented in every way, loving to work, not liking laziness, being able to endure hardship, seeing earnings gained without effort and labor as worthless, knowing that abundance is the result of hard work, considering not poverty but laziness as shameful, knowing that the consequence of laziness is embarrassment and hardship, and valuing work, not talk [36]. It is seen that primary school students' descriptions of a hardworking person as being skillful, talented, versatile and success-oriented, specialized in one's field, not being lazy, disliking laziness, making an effort and being work-focused overlap with the common characteristics of the diligent person model in Turkish and Kyrgyz proverbs. When the primary school students' views on the characteristics of a diligent person are evaluated, it is observed that they describe such a person as someone who maintains socialization, is driven by internal and external effects, is achieved, healthy, and determined, prioritizes personal development, manages time effectively, and possesses biological potential.

In this study, primary school students were asked about their views regarding what a diligent person does. Students explained what a diligent person does using codes evaluated under the categories of school life, socialization, achievement, time management, personal development, health, determination, internal influence, and external influence. It has been understood that the categories in question and the codes that constitute these categories are

similar to the answers given to the previous research question, namely the characteristics of a diligent person. In other words, primary school students explained what a diligent person does by referring to the characteristics of a diligent person. Some of these characteristics are as follows: studies lessons, attends school regularly, loves the country, follows the rules, does their job well, uses time effectively, improves oneself, takes care of health, stays consistent and determined, fulfills their responsibilities, and listens to their elders. Therefore, it can be said that primary school students evaluate the characteristics of a diligent person and the actions of a diligent person from the same perspective. In this context, it can be concluded that the answers given by students to the questions are consistent with each other.

Another question of the study aims to identify what changes might occur in a person's life as a result of being hardworking. The other question of the study aimed to determine what would change in a person's life because of being diligent. The responses to this question emphasized the category of achievement very much. Some of the descriptions in the category of achievement include would become a professional, would realize dreams, would get into university/high school, would achieve success, life would change, would leave a mark in history. According to primary school students, the second important dimension that will change in a person's life because of being diligent is related to being appreciated and liked. The codes such as would be loved by around them, would be appreciated, would make loved ones proud, would make others happy, would have a wide social circle, would be rewarded, would gain respect, friend circle would change, would become a preferred person, would be supported by others and would gain people's trust show that what would change in a person's life due to being diligent is related to external influence. According to Gül and Alimbekov [36], diligence has always had an important place among the characteristics that individuals should carry in both Turkish and Kyrgyz, and diligent people have always been praised. According to Harjula [71], a Meru proverb includes an insult directed at a lazy person who, due to their laziness, is deprived even of the most basic necessities of life. The fact that diligence is praised and laziness is reviled supports primary school students' descriptions that diligent people deserve praise.

According to primary school students, another aspect of a person's life that may change due to being diligent is related to peer bullying. The theme of peer bullying, composed of the codes would be mocked, would be envied, would be excluded, and would be exploited is reflected in the statement of student Ş-3-22: "...Sometimes someone takes advantage of them, and sometimes they are mocked for being diligent." This indicates that successful students are clearly subjected to various forms of bullying, including verbal, relational, social, and psychological types. A review of the literature reveals that academic achievement is a predictive variable for peer bullying, and that exposure to bullying decreases as academic achievement levels increase [72,73]. It is also stated that children who are subjected to peer bullying have lower academic achievement compared to those who are not subjected to peer bullying [74-76].

Primary school students' descriptions of how they define diligence, the personality traits they associate with diligent individuals, their thoughts on what a diligent person does, and their thoughts on how being diligent can change a person's life, considering the settlement they live in (city, district, and village); it is understood that the categories of school life, achievement, determination, personal development, internal influence, and biological potential are expressed with equal importance by those in all three residential areas. Overall, it is understood that primary school students define diligence both as a concept and as a value through notions such as the task a person is engaged in, achievement, determination, personal development, internal influence, and biological potential. However, it is seen that the statements in the categories of health by students living in the city, socialization and external influence by those living in the district are more dominant than the others, and the statements in the category of time management are used more by students living in the city and district than those living in the village. Again, it is noteworthy that the statements of those living in the city in the categories of socialization and those living in the village in the categories of health are fewer than the others. The fact that students studying in the district describe diligence more than others in the context of socialization and external influence may be closely related to the social structure of the environment they live in and the expectations of society. The fact that interpersonal relations in cities are more distant and social solidarity is dimmer than in districts may be a source of the fact that the discourses of students in cities regarding the socialization category are less than those in districts. In terms of external influence, it can be said that factors such as listening to elders, being loved, making one's loved ones proud and making one's loved ones happy are also related to socialization. These can be shown as the reasons why students living in the district express diligence more than others in the context of socialization and external

influence.

The fact that students in cities and districts associate diligence with time management more than students in villages may be related to the opportunities offered by city and district life and the discipline brought by educational processes. These opportunities may cause students in cities to have a more intense academic pace and assume more responsibilities. Study hours, homework, exams, various courses, activities, student coaching, and supplementary lessons, etc., all reveal the need for students to plan their time more effectively. This may have caused them to associate diligence with using time effectively and being planned. Based on the results evaluated within the scope of the city, district and village, it has been determined that although the meanings that students attribute to the value of diligence have certain common elements, they show differences depending on the environment they live in. These differences indicate that students shape the value of diligence according to their own life practices and interpret it in relation to the environmental conditions in which they live.

In this study, primary school students were asked to draw pictures about diligence, and students depicted diligence with the pictures they drew and the writings they wrote on the pictures. The visual and written expressions in these pictures were evaluated under the categories of studying, school life, achievement, working at work, socialization, biological potential and peer bullying. However, it was determined that both the visuals and the texts in the visuals depicted contrasts related to diligence. Contrasts such as diligence/laziness and tidy/untidy were depicted in both the visuals and the writings in the visuals, happy/sad was depicted in the visuals, and richness/poverty, kindness/evil were depicted in the writings in the visuals. It was observed that primary school students mostly included book, pencil, desk, certificates of achievement, notebook, teacher and student in their drawings. In addition, visuals such as bee, tractor, factory, decoration, scientists and Atatürk's biography were also used. The fact that Atatürk, an important figure for Turks, is associated with diligence may also be an important finding. Primary school 4th grade students described Mustafa Kemal Atatürk as diligent [77], primary school 4th grade students associated the value of patriotism with Atatürk [78], primary school students explained, under the theme "relating to Atatürk's characteristics," that "We are also hardworking and honest like Atatürk [79]. The fact that primary school students generally express Atatürk in describing values supports the results of this study. Alongside Atatürk, scientists such as William James, Pythagoras, and Albert Einstein were also used to depict diligence. Studies focusing on the depiction of scientists indicate that diligence, working style, and working environment are commonly expressed [80–82]. In this study, it was observed that students depicted diligence by drawing a factory, factory workers and a tractor. In a study conducted with primary school students (3rd, 4th, 5th, 6th and 7th grades), it was also found that students depicted diligence with a factory and a combine harvester [83]. It can be said that primary school students are influenced by their immediate environment in portraying diligence. As a matter of fact, when the results are analyzed, it is seen that the students who drew the factory, factory workers and tractor are the students living in the village.

The relationships between the codes generated from the answers given by primary school students to all questions about diligence (what is seen together with what, in which relationship structure various message elements are found together) were determined by contingency (relational) analysis. It was observed that the codes studied lessons and "fulfilling one's responsibilities" occupied a central position and had relationships with each other and with different codes. It was determined that there was a strong relationship between these two codes and that both codes were jointly related to the codes of "studying, would succeed in lessons, would become a professional, being clean and listening to teacher/lesson". Therefore, it can be said that school life and internal influence are closely related to each other and that primary school students think of work and responsibility together. Achievement, determination, socialization, health and time management are closely related to school life. Among these relationships, it can be said that the relationship between school life and achievement stands out. As a matter of fact, the code "studies lessons", which represents school life, was frequently used together with the codes "would succeed in lessons, being successful in lessons, being successful, becoming successful, being good at one's work, would become a professional", which represent achievement. According to Mitchell et al. [84], students make cognitive decisions about the importance of school for their future life success and form affective connections with school and individuals in the school environment. The fact that students see their cognitive and affective activities in school life as important for achieving success may have caused them to express school life and achievement together. Another noteworthy finding in the contingency analysis is that the code of becoming a professional is expressed together with the code of would realize dreams. From this, it is understood that realizing one's dreams is associated with having a profession. When both the results of frequency and categorical analysis and the results of contingency analysis

are evaluated together, primary school students stated that diligence is related to work (school life), achievement, socialization and personal development; that it is affected by determination, time management, internal influence, external influence and biological potential; and that it requires being healthy.

## 5. Recommendations

From the perspective of primary school students, the following definition of diligence can be proposed: Diligence is a value that includes making continuous and careful efforts to achieve a set goal, using time effectively, being open to lifelong learning, acting with a sense of responsibility, being self-confident and self-controlled, and putting them into practice together; it is a value that is affected by achievement, biological potential and being appreciated.

It can be suggested that the categories of “school life, achievement, determination, socialization, time management, personal development, biological potential, external influence, internal influence, health, studying and peer bullying” created from primary school students’ written and visual descriptions of diligence should be taken into consideration in the education of diligence value.

Students included personalities such as Atatürk, William James, Pythagoras and Albert Einstein in their descriptions of diligence. In life science and social studies lessons, where value education is prioritized, personalities who have come to the forefront with their diligence can be utilized while teaching the value of diligence.

Primary school students explained diligence by emphasizing peer bullying in both written and visual descriptions. From these explanations, it is understood that hardworking people are exposed to verbal, relational, social and psychological types of bullying. In the value education process, the value of diligence can be emphasized and activities can be included to show that being diligent is a trait that should be praised, not bullied.

It was concluded that students’ views on the value of diligence differed according to the type of settlement in which they lived. In practices aimed at fostering the value of diligence, it may be recommended to take into account the socio-cultural environments in which students are situated.

This study examined primary school students’ views on the value of diligence. Similar studies can be conducted with middle school, high school, and higher education students.

The study examined primary school students’ views on the value of diligence. Using a similar method, research can be conducted focusing on different values.

## Author Contributions

Conceptualization, E.N.Ş. and E.Ç.; methodology, E.N.Ş, E.Ç. and N.Ç.; data collection, B.T. and N.Ç.; data analysis, E.N.Ş., E.Ç. and B.T.; interpretation of the results, B.T.; writing—original draft preparation, E.N.Ş., E.Ç. and N.Ç.; writing—review and editing, E.N.Ş., E.Ç. and B.T.; visualization, E.N.Ş. and E.Ç.; supervision, B.T. All authors have read and agreed to the published version of the manuscript.

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## Institutional Review Board Statement

The study was conducted in accordance with the Declaration of Helsinki, and approved by the Kırşehir Ahi Evran University Committee on Research and Publication Ethics in the Social and Humanities Sciences (protocol code 2025/02/11 and date of approval January 22, 2025).

## Informed Consent Statement

Informed consent was obtained from the parents or legal guardians of all child participants prior to their participation in the study, with the children having informed their parents accordingly. Participation in the study was entirely voluntary, and participants were free to withdraw at any time without any consequences. All information provided by the participants was kept confidential. The study protocol was reviewed and approved by the school to ensure the rights, safety, and well-being of all child participants were protected throughout the research process.

## Data Availability Statement

All relevant data supporting the findings of this study are included within the manuscript. Raw data are not publicly available to ensure the anonymity and privacy of the primary school participants.

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## Conflicts of Interest

The authors declare no conflict of interest.

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