

Values in Social Studies Curriculum: Case of Turkey

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Abstract

The importance of values in the development of society and the establishment of relations among individuals has made the social studies course important in the transfer of values. Because the social studies course is intertwined with values by its nature whether it is given directly or not. In this framework, values were included in every learning area, unit and subject of the social studies course, which was included in the curriculum for the first time in 1968. However, the explicit inclusion of values under a title in social studies curriculum was in 2005 with the reorganization of the education system according to the constructivist approach. The curricula have been made more explanatory and systematic compared to previous curricula. It has continued in the same way to the present day. In this study, in which the curricula that have been implemented since 2005 are examined, the values are given in tables by using the document analysis method. Then, it was interpreted by subjecting it to descriptive analysis. Thus, it is purposed to reveal the change and transformation by determining the values added and removed in the social studies curriculum.

Keywords: curriculum, social studies, value, values education.

1. Introduction

Values and values education based on virtue teachings in the context of moral philosophy in Ancient Greece and Ancient China have gained a universal character upon the Declaration of Human Rights of 1789, published after the French Revolution in the modern sense, and The Universal Declaration of Human Rights of 1948, adopted by the United Nations (UN) established after World War II. In 1995, within the scope of the “Living Values Education Program” by UNESCO operating under the UN, values education started to be implemented through the project “Share Our Values for the World”, which includes 12 universal values: Love, Respect, Responsibility, Tolerance, Freedom, Peace, Happiness, Honesty, Cooperation, Humility, Simplicity, and Unity (Web1).

The fact that the concept of value has a very wide content and scope has caused its definition to be diverse. In this context, the concept of value is defined as “useful, meaningful, wise, beneficial, and necessary attitudes and manners” by Balci (2014), as “things that are considered important, accepted, liked by the individual, group, or society, and desired by the majority” by Haralambos (1987), as “people’s ideas about ethical or appropriate behavior about what is right and wrong, what is desirable and undesirable” by Marshall (1998), as “desirable purposes beyond relevant situations of varying importance, serving as guiding principles in the life of the individual or other social beings” by Schwartz (1994), as “the set of ideals, habits and

behaviors that **are or should be possessed individually and institutionally**” by Parlak (2012), and as **“the criteria that the individuals use to explain right and wrong”** by Halstead (1996).

In general, the concept of value has been defined as all the material and spiritual elements of a society. At present time, the increase in inter-communal interaction, especially due to the development of technology, has led to the concept of value being more important because modern society has faced many serious problems, especially in terms of moral values (Zavalsiz, 2014). The weakening of family ties, the decrease in love-respect and interest, which is considered as the basis of society, the increase in violence, alcohol, cigarette, and substance addiction, the increase in internet / social media addiction, which has reached such dangerous dimensions, that individuals do not fulfill their responsibilities towards each other, and growing insecurity etc. are included among these problems. In order to prevent the further increase of these negativities, trainings have been started to be given under the name of character education in the USA, China, Japan and EU countries, and under the name of values education in Turkey (Ekinici, 2018). Thus, the importance of values has become a subject that is emphasized not only in the relations and discourses of individuals with each other in the dimension of society, but also in the dimension of states and governments.

In Turkey, the most important expressions regarding values and values education are included in the National Education Basic Law No. 1739, dated 1973, which regulates the Turkish **national education system, with the phrase “to raise individuals who adopt, protect and develop the national, moral, humanitarian, spiritual and cultural values of the Turkish Nation”** (MoNE, 1973). Thus, the importance of values and values education has been emphasized in a law. Despite this, the values purposed to be gained were not given under a direct heading until 2005 in the curricula, especially in social studies. It was given implicitly in learning areas, units, and subjects.

The concept of value, which has a very wide content, was included in the Social Studies curriculum as a separate title at a very late stage in 2005 (MoNE, 2005). Although values were included in the previous 1968, 1973, 1989, 1990, 1995, and 1998 curricula, they were not written **in a concrete way. The concept of value has been included in the articles under the title of “The aims of the Social Studies course”, between the lines, with expressions such as “...connected to the values of the Turkish revolution and ready to protect them...”, “...by recognizing our national values...”, “our economic values and our national resources...”. In addition, various values are included through such expressions as “...they welcome each other's views and beliefs with respect and tolerance...”, “working together, taking responsibility, helping and making decisions...”, “...the feelings of love, respect and trust in the Turkish nation, flag, Turkish soldier and Turkish army...”.** However, since it is not clear under a title which values the curriculum prioritizes, it has been tried to understand which value should be mentioned based on the connotation in the learning area, unit and subject headings. This situation brought with it a subjectivity. This is left to the breadth of the value or values universe of the person who reads the curriculum. Thus, one or more values were evaluated within a learning area and subject.

The values that have been introduced in the social studies curriculum since 2005 have **been included as “It attaches importance to the adoption of universal values by putting national identity at the center”** (MoNE, 2005). Values have been developed with various additions and subtractions over time, and in the Social Studies Curriculum prepared in 2018, they have been **made more inclusive and suitable for the nature of social studies as “Knowing the importance and ways of being a virtuous person by basing on national and spiritual values and adopting universal values”** (MoNE, 2018). **In this context, based on the fact that values are a legacy left from the national and spiritual resources of the society from past to present, it is purposed in this study to reveal the situation of taking place in social studies curriculum and its subsequent development.**

2. Method

In this study, in which the document analysis method was used, the values in the Social Studies Curriculum of 2005, 2015, 2017 and 2018 were tried to be examined. Although the document analysis method used in qualitative studies is considered as reaching a conclusion only through documents, it has been an effective method in revealing the understanding of the period and the change and transformation over time (Yildirim & Simsek, 2020). The obtained findings were subjected to descriptive analysis.

3. Findings

In this section, the values included in the social studies curriculum implemented between 2005 and 2018 are presented in tables on a yearly basis.

3.1 Values in Primary Education Social Studies Course 4th - 5th Grades Curriculum and Primary Education Social Studies Course 6th - 7th Grades Curriculum and Guide (Draft Edition) dated 2005

In 2005, the Social Studies course was reorganized with a constructivist approach. For the first time, the expression of values took place concretely in the 4th, 5th, 6th, and 7th Grade Social Studies Curriculums prepared within this framework.

Table 1. Values in Social Studies Course 4th-5th and 6th-7th Grades Curriculum dated 2005

Being Fair	Diligence	Tolerance	Love
Giving Importance to Family Unity	Solidarity	Hospitality	Responsibility
Independence	Sensitivity	Freedom	Cleanliness
Peace	Honesty	Giving Importance to Being Healthy	Patriotism
Scientificity	Aesthetics	Respect	Helpfulness

As seen in Table 1, the values are given directly under a heading in the 2005 curriculum. In this context, 20 values such as being fair, giving importance to family unity, independence, peace, scientificity, diligence, solidarity, sensitivity, honesty, aesthetics, tolerance, hospitality, freedom, giving importance to being healthy, respect, love, responsibility, cleanliness, patriotism, and helpfulness are included.

3.2 Values in the 2015 Social Studies Course 4th, 5th, 6th, and 7th Grades Curriculum

In 2015, the social studies course curriculum was renewed depending on the developments in the field of education. Values are not included as a separate heading in this curriculum. **In each learning area, there is a title with the name of “value”, and it is stated which value will be given.**

Table 2. Values in the 2015 Social Studies Course 4th, 5th, 6th, and 7th Grades Curriculum

Being Fair	Solidarity	Tolerance	Responsibility
Peace	Adopting a Democratic Attitude	Respect for Cultural Heritage	Saving
Conscious Consumption	Sensitivity	Freedom	Cleanliness
Diligence	Respect for Diversity	Sharing	Mutualization
Environmental Awareness	Etiquette	Respect	

In this curriculum, 19 values such as being fair, peace, conscious consumption, diligence, environmental awareness, solidarity, adopting a democratic attitude, sensitivity, respect for diversity, etiquette, tolerance, respect for cultural heritage, freedom, sharing, respect, responsibility, saving, cleanliness, and mutualization are included.

3.3 Values in the Social Studies Course Draft Curriculum (Primary and Secondary School 4th, 5th, 6th, and 7th Grades) dated 2017

Depending on the developments in the field of education in 2017, the need to renew the social studies course curriculum has arisen. In this framework, a draft program was prepared beforehand.

Table 3. Values in the Social Studies Course Draft Curriculum (Primary and Secondary School 4th, 5th, 6th, and 7th Grades) dated 2017

Giving Importance to Family Unity	Nature Love	Tolerance	Respect
Independence	Sensitivity to the Natural Environment	Cooperation	Responsibility
Peace	Honesty	Cultural Heritage Sensitivity	History Consciousness
Scientificity	Aesthetics	Self-Control	Saving
Diligence	Equality	Freedom	Patriotism
Solidarity	Ethic	Self Confidence	Helpfulness
Adopting a Democratic Attitude	Respect for Diversity	Self-Esteem	

As can be seen in Table 3, changes were made in the values and numbers in the 2017 draft curriculum. Values given as a heading in each learning area in the 2015 curriculum are given together under a separate heading as in 2005. In this curriculum, there are 27 values such as giving importance to family unity, independence, peace, scientificity, diligence, solidarity, adopting a democratic attitude, nature love, sensitivity to the natural environment, honesty, aesthetics, equality, ethic, respect for diversity, tolerance, cooperation, cultural heritage sensitivity, self-control, freedom, self-confidence, self-esteem, respect, responsibility, history consciousness, saving, patriotism, and helpfulness.

3.4 Values in the 2017 Social Studies Curriculum (Primary and Secondary School 4th, 5th, 6th, and 7th Grades)

After the draft program prepared in 2017 was published, the 2017 curriculum was prepared as a result of the discussions and regulations on it. Values have been rearranged.

Table 4. Values in the Social Studies Curriculum
(Primary and Secondary School 4th, 5th, 6th, and 7th Grades) dated 2017

Justice	Diligence	Equality	Saving
Giving Importance to Family Unity	Solidarity	Freedom	Patriotism
Independence	Sensitivity	Respect	Helpfulness
Peace	Honesty	Love	
Scientificity	Aesthetics	Responsibility	

As seen in Table 4, the number of values determined as 27 in the 2017 draft program has been reduced to 18 in the 2017 program. Justice, caring for family unity, independence, peace, scientificity, diligence, solidarity, sensitivity, honesty, aesthetics, equality, freedom, respect, love, responsibility, saving, patriotism, and helpfulness took place among these values.

3.5 Values in Social Studies Curriculum (Primary and Secondary School 4th, 5th, 6th, and 7th Grades) dated 2018

In 2018, the social studies course curriculum was rearranged. In this curriculum, **unlike other curriculums, “Root Values” took place. Values remained as they were in the previous curriculum.**

Table 5. Root Values in the 2018 “Social Studies Curriculum
(Primary and Secondary School 4th, 5th, 6th, and 7th Grades)

Justice	Self-Control	Love	Helpfulness
Friendship	Patience	Responsibility	
Honesty	Respect	Patriotism	

As seen in Table 5, there are 10 root values in this curriculum: Justice, friendship, honesty, self-control, patience, respect, love, responsibility, patriotism, and helpfulness.

Table 6. Values in the 2018 Social Studies Curriculum
(Primary and Secondary School 4th, 5th, 6th, and 7th Grades)

Justice	Diligence	Equality	Saving
Giving Importance to Family Unity	Solidarity	Freedom	Patriotism
Independence	Sensitivity	Respect	Helpfulness
Peace	Honesty	Love	
Scientificity	Aesthetics	Responsibility	

As can be seen in Table 6, 18 values in the 2017 program have been preserved as numbers. These values are given as justice, caring for family unity, independence, peace, science, diligence, solidarity, sensitivity, honesty, aesthetics, equality, freedom, respect, love, responsibility, saving, patriotism and helpfulness.

4. Conclusion

When the results of the study were evaluated, it was seen that some values included in the social studies curriculum since 2005 were not fixed, and additions and subtractions were made. In order for the data obtained in the study to be seen and interpreted better, the values added and removed from the social studies curriculum since 2005 are given together in the table below.

Table 7. Values in Social Studies Curriculum Since 2005

Values	2005	2015	2017 Draft	2017	2018
Justice	-	-	-	+	+
Being Fair	+	+	-	-	-
Giving Importance to Family Unity	+	-	+	+	+
Independence	+	-	+	+	+
Peace	+	+	+	+	+
Scientificity	+	-	+	+	+
Conscious Consumption	-	+	-	-	-
Diligence	+	+	+	+	+
Environmental Awareness	-	+	-	-	-
Solidarity	+	+	+	+	+
Adopting a Democratic Attitude	-	+	+	-	-
Sensitivity	+	+	-	+	+
Nature Love	-	-	+	-	-
Sensitivity to the Natural Environment	-	-	+	-	-
Honesty	+	-	+	+	+
Aesthetics	+	-	+	+	+
Equality	-	-	+	+	+
Ethic	-	-	+	-	-
Respect for Diversity	-	+	+	-	-
Etiquette	-	+	-	-	-
Tolerance	+	+	+	-	-
Cooperation	-	-	+	-	-
Cultural Heritage Sensitivity	-	-	+	-	-
Respect for Cultural Heritage	-	+	-	-	-
Hospitality	+	-	-	-	-
Self-Control	-	-	+	-	-
Freedom	+	+	+	+	+
Self Confidence	-	-	+	-	-
Self-Esteem	-	-	+	-	-
Sharing	-	+	-	-	-
Giving Importance to Being Healthy	+	-	-	-	-
Respect	+	+	+	+	+
Love	+	-	-	+	+
Responsibility	+	+	+	+	+
History Consciousness	-	-	+	-	-
Saving	-	+	+	+	+
Cleanliness	+	+	-	-	-
Patriotism	+	-	+	+	+
Mutualization	-	+	-	-	-
Helpfulness	+	-	+	+	+

A total of 20 values were included in the curriculum prepared with a constructivist approach in 2005. An arrangement was made in the 2015 program for these values, and the

number of values was reduced to 19. While some values were added to the program, some values were removed from the program. **“Paying Importance to Family Unity”, “Independence”, “Scientificity”, “Honesty”, “Aesthetics”, “Hospitality”, “Giving Importance to Being Healthy”, “Love”, “Patriotism”, and “Helpfulness”** values included in the 2005 curriculum were not included in the 2015 curriculum. Instead of these, the values of **“Conscious Consumption”, “Environmental Awareness”, “Adopting a Democratic Attitude”, “Respect for Diversity”, “Etiquette”, “Respect for Cultural Heritage”, “Sharing”, “Saving”, and “Mutualization”** were included.

A draft program was prepared by trying to organize the 2015 curriculum in 2017. Since there are 27 values in this draft curriculum, it has been the program with the highest number of values compared to the previous and later curriculums. The values of **“Being Fair”, “Conscious Consumption”, “Environmental Awareness”, “Sensitivity”, “Etiquette”, “Respect for Cultural Heritage”, “Sharing”, “Cleanliness”, and “Mutualization”** in the 2015 curriculum were not included in the draft curriculum. Instead of these values, **“Giving Importance to Family Unity”, “Independence”, “Nature Love”, “Sensitivity to the Natural Environment”, “Honesty”, “Aesthetics”, “Equality”, “Ethic”, “Cooperation”, “Cultural Heritage Sensitivity”, “Self-Control”, “Self-Confidence”, “Self-Respect”, “History Consciousness”, “Patriotism”, and “Helpfulness”** values are included. However, with the reduction of the number of values to 18 in the curriculum prepared in 2017, there has been a change in these values. Whereas **“Adopting a Democratic Attitude”, “Nature Love”, “Sensitivity to the Natural Environment”, “Ethic”, “Respect for Diversity”, “Tolerance”, “Cooperation”, “Cultural Heritage Sensitivity”, “Self-Control”, “Self-Confidence”, “Self-Esteem”, and “History Consciousness”** in the draft curriculum were not included, such values of **“Justice”, “Sensitivity”, and “Love”** were included. In the social studies curriculum prepared in 2018 and still being implemented today, the 18 values in the social studies curriculum of 2017 remained the same without any changes.

Another result that emerged in the study was that there were 40 values in total in the curriculum between 2005-2018 and additions or subtractions were made from these values according to the content of the programs. **“Peace”, “Diligence”, “Solidarity”, “Freedom”, “Respect”, and “Responsibility”** are the values that do not change and take place in every curriculum. These values, which are suitable for the nature of social studies, have remained constant like the **“Root Values”**. In fact, with these universal values, the fact that social studies is not just a course has emerged. Some of these values such as **“Peace”, “Freedom”, “Respect”, and “Responsibility”** are among the values in UNESCO's **“Living Values Education Program”**. The same situation was seen in the values of **“Honesty”, “Respect”, “Love”, and “Responsibility”,** which are among the **“Root Values”** in the social studies curriculum of 2018.

Considering the values in the social studies course curriculum, it is intertwined with social studies depending on the content and purpose of the social studies course. The fact that social studies was not a mere course was effective in the emergence of this situation. Discussions and arrangements in the next period about the social studies course, which was thought to be a course covering only history, geography, and citizenship courses in the first stage, were made within this framework. However, social studies have not only been a lesson that conveys information, but also a lesson that covers the whole of values that prepare individuals for life, offer practical information, and teach how to be a human first and then a citizen. Since values are formed according to the socio-cultural and economic structure of each country, it is purposed to teach social and universal values through the social studies course.

Considering the findings obtained in the study in general, the general purpose of the social studies course is to raise individuals who are active citizens, believe in democracy and its power, protect their future based on their past, respect differences, and aim to set a good example for future generations. For this purpose, values have been included in social studies curriculum as a reflection of an understanding that cares about gaining attitudes and behaviors in different value categories.

Through the social studies course, it is purposed to help the individual to realize her/his social existence, to examine the interaction with her/his social and physical environment in the context of the past, present, and future, to reflect social sciences and citizenship knowledge and to combine learning areas in order for people to realize their social existence. In other words, social studies is formed from a teaching approach that examines the social and physical environment of the human being, as well as her/his past, present, and future. Therefore, values were not included in a separate curriculum or a separate learning area. Values have been included in all and all fields of social studies curriculum, depending on the richness of their content. Therefore, a values education was given within the scope of social studies course.

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