

## Analysis of the Social Studies Course Book of 4th Grades in terms of Values

Tugba KAFADAR  
Erciyes University

**Abstract:** In the research, it was aimed to analyse the social studies course book of 4th graders in Turkey in terms of values. The research was designed in the form of a case study, which is one of the qualitative study design forms. The research data were determined according to the purposeful sampling method. As the book related to a grade in which the social studies education is given at the elementary school level, the social studies course book of 4th graders was generated. The research data were obtained through document analysis. And the data obtained were analyzed through content analysis. According to the outcome of the research, the following results were obtained. In the learning area of "individual and society " the values of; scientificity, responsibility, patriotism, respect for differences, success, benevolence, and in the learning area of "culture and heritage " the values of; giving importance to family unity, respect for elders, love, respect, tolerance, forgiveness, peace, success, honesty, courage and patriotism have been obtained. In the learning area of "people places and environments " the values of; benevolence, scientificity, being a sharer, patience, courage, love of nature, sensitivity to the natural environment, giving importance to family unity, in the learning area of "production, distribution and consumption" the values of; being healthy, benevolence, justice, austerity and success have been determined. In the learning area of "active citizenship " the values of; equality, respect for differences, love, being healthy, freedom, benevolence, responsibility, self-confidence, diligence, friendship, solidarity, being a sharer, peace, patriotism, success, scientificity, secularism, courage, in the learning area of "global connections " the values of; hospitality, responsibility, reliability, honesty, self-confidence, politeness, respect for differences, peace and love were the values obtained.

**Keywords:** Social studies, 4th graders, Course book, Value

### Introduction

Values are criteria that direct social life, ensure social continuity, and are considered important among the members of society. According to Zecha (2007), values are anything that supports individual life or human health without harming others or the society as a whole. Values are not independent entities according to Aspin (2007). It is a part of human action and humans' relationship with the society. According to Schwartz (2012), people turn to appropriate goals to cope with their own problems, and they communicate and cooperate with each other with regard to their goals. Values are socially desirable concepts used to mentally express these goals. They are also a terminology used to express these goals in social interactions.

Values are classified in the literature as follows: Spranger (1928) classified values as scientific, economic, aesthetic, social, political, and religious values (as cited in Akbaş, 2004); Rokeach (1973), as terminal values (goals) and instrumental values; and Schwartz (1992) classified them in 10 dimensions as *self-direction, stimulation, hedonism, achievement, power, universalism, benevolence, security, conformity, and tradition*. Schwartz et al. (2012), on the other hand, grouped values in 4 dimensions: *self-enhancement, openness to change, self-transcendence, and conservation*.

Values education starts with the family and continues throughout life. Schools play an important role in this process. It is aimed that students gain these values through many classes in schools. One of these courses is Social Studies. Due to its content, social studies is one of the courses in which values are provided the most. Therefore, social studies course assumes an important role in the process of gaining values. Course books play an

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important role in the process of teaching social studies to students. For this reason, it is important in value education to determine how much values are included in social studies course books. This study can fill an important gap in the field in terms of examining the values in Social Studies course books and determining if there are deficiencies.

When the relevant literature is examined, there are many studies on value education. When we look at these studies, there are studies on value preferences of educational administrators (Haydon, 2007), value priorities of individuals from different cultures (Schwartz et al. 2001), value orientation of teachers (Kuşdil & Kağıtçıbaşı, 2000), value preferences of teacher candidates and their relationship with different variables (Dilmaç, Bozgeyikli and Çıkılı, 2008), values education given in schools (Halstead, 1996; Doğanay, 2006 Lovat, Toomey, and Clement 2010), the effectiveness of the values education program (Demirhan Işcan, 2007), the examination of social studies curricula of different countries in terms of values education (Kafadar, Öztürk & Katılmış, 2018). However, no study was found that examines the 4th grade social studies course book in terms of values in Turkey. The current study is expected to fill an important gap in the related literature in this aspect.

### **Purpose of the Study**

The overall objective of this study is to examine Turkey's 4th grade social studies course book in terms of values

## **Method**

### **Research Model**

This research has a qualitative research design. Qualitative research can be defined as “research aimed at revealing perceptions and events realistically and holistically in the natural environment” (Yıldırım and Şimşek, 2011, p. 39). In studies, “you need to choose a research design linked to the problem statement and review whether this design you choose is suitable for your worldview, personality, and abilities” (Merriam, 2013, p. 1). In the research, one of the qualitative research designs, case study was preferred. Case study “is an empirical research method that is used (1) in studies on a current phenomenon within its real-life framework (content), (2) where the boundaries between the phenomenon and its content are not clear, and (3) when there is more than one evidence or data source” (Yin, cited in 1984, Yıldırım and Şimşek, 2011, p. 277).

### **Study Group**

The study group of the research was specified according to the criterion sampling, one of the purposeful sampling methods. According to Patton (1987), the purposeful sampling method that emerged within the qualitative research tradition “enables in-depth study of situations that are considered to have rich information” (cited in Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2011, p. 107). The 4th grade social studies course book in Turkey constitutes the study group of the research.

### **Data Collection and Analysis**

In the research, data were obtained by document analysis. Document analysis can be used alone in the data collection process in cases where observation and interview methods are not possible in qualitative research. Documents are “rich data sources that should be used effectively in qualitative research. The researcher can obtain the data in accordance with the nature of the research without observation and interview. Therefore, document analysis saves the researcher time and money” (Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2011, p. 187-188). The research data were analyzed with the content analysis method. “The main purpose of content analysis is to reach concepts and relations that can explain the data collected” (Yıldırım and Şimşek, 2006, p. 227).

## **Findings**

When Table 1 is examined, the values found in the "individual and society" learning area in the 4th grade social studies course books are: scientific (f7), responsibility (f5), patriotism (f4), respect for differences (f4), success (f4) f3), and love (f2).

Table 1. 4th grade course book, values in the "individual and society" section

Grade level	Learning Field	Values	f
4th grade	"Individual and society"	Scientific	7
		Responsibility	5
		Patriotism	4
		Respect for differences	4
		Success	4
		Benevolence	3
		Love	2

When Table 2 is examined, the values in the "culture and heritage" learning area in the 4th grade social studies course book are: importance of family unity (f8), respect for elders (f7), love (f7), respect (f7), tolerance (f4), forgiveness (f2), peace (f2), success (f2), honesty (f1), courage (f1), and patriotism (f1).

Table 2. 4th grade course book, values in the "culture and heritage" learning area

Grade level	Learning Field	Values	f
4th grade	"Culture and Heritage"	Importance of family	8
		Respect for the elders	7
		Love	7
		Respect	7
		Tolerance	4
		Forgiveness	2
		Peace	2
		Success	2
		Honesty	1
		Courage	1
		Patriotism	1

When Table 3 is examined, the values found in the "people, places and environments" learning area in the 4th grade social studies course book are: benevolence (f9), scientific (f8), sharing (f8), patience (f5), courage (f4), love of nature (f4), sensitivity to natural environment (f4), and importance of family (f2).

Table 3. 4th grade textbook, values in the "people, places and environments" learning area

Grade level	Learning Field	Values	f
4th grade	"People, Places, and Environments"	Benevolence	9
		Scientific	8
		Sharing	8
		Patience	5
		Courage	4
		Love of nature	4
		Sensitivity to the natural environment	4
		Importance of family	2

When Table 4 is examined, the values found in the "science, technology and society" learning area in the 4th grade social studies course book are as follows: Scientific (f6), sensitivity to the natural environment (f4), success (f4) and sensitivity (f3).

Table 4. 4th grade course book, values in the "science, technology and society" learning area

Grade level	Learning Field	Values	f
4th grade	"Science, technology and society"	Scientific	6
		Sensitivity to the natural environment	4
		Success	4
		Sensitivity	3

When Table 5 is examined, the values found in the "production, distribution and consumption" learning area in the 4th grade social studies course book are as follows: Being healthy (f5), benevolence (f5), justice (f3), saving (f2), and success (f1).

Table 5. 4th grade course book, values in the "*production, distribution and consumption*" learning area

Grade level	Learning Field	Values	f
4th grade	"Production, distribution, and consumption"	Being healthy	5
		Benevolence	5
		Justice	3
		Saving	2
		Success	1

When Table 6 is examined, the following values are found in the "active citizenship" learning area in the 4th grade social studies course book: Equality (f11), respect for differences (f10), love (f8), being healthy (f7), freedom (f7), benevolence (f6), responsibility (f6), self-confidence (f5), hard work (f5), friendship (f3), solidarity (f2), sharing (f1), peace (f1), patriotism (f1), success (f1) science (f1), secularism (f1) and courage (f1).

Table 6. 4th grade course book, values in the "*effective citizenship*" learning area

Grade level	Learning Field	Values	f
4th grade	Active Citizenship	Equality	11
		Respect for differences	10
		Love	8
		Being healthy	7
		Freedom	7
		Benevolence	6
		Responsibility	6
		Self-confidence	5
		Hard Work	5
		Friendship	3
		Solidarity	2
		Sharing	1
		Peace	1
		Patriotism	1
		Success	1
		Scientific	1
		Secular	1
		Courage	1

When Table 7 is examined, the following values are found in the "global connections" learning area in the 4th grade social studies course book: Hospitality (f5), responsibility (f5), reliability (f4), honesty (f3), self-confidence (f2), kindness (f1) respect for differences (f1), peace (f1) and love (f1).

Table 7. 4th grade course book, values in the "*global connections*" learning area

Grade level	Learning Field	Values	f
4th grade	"Global connections"	Hospitality	5
		Responsibility	5
		Reliability	4
		Honesty	3
		Self-confidence	2
		Kindness	1
		Respect for differences	1
		Peace	1
		Love	1

## Discussion

According to the results of the research, the following results were obtained. The values of scientific, responsibility, patriotism, respect for differences, success, benevolence were found in the field of "*individual and society*" learning; the values of importance of family, respect for elders, love, respect, tolerance, forgiveness, peace, success, honesty, courage and patriotism were found in the learning area "*culture and heritage*." In the learning area "*people, places and environment*," the values of benevolence, scientific, sharing,

patience, courage, love of nature, sensitivity to natural environment, importance of family were found; in the learning area "science, technology and society," scientific, sensitivity to natural environment, success, sensitivity; in the learning area "production, distribution and consumption," being healthy, benevolence, justice, saving, and success in the learning area "production, distribution and consumption." The values of equality, respect for differences, love, being healthy, freedom, benevolence, responsibility, self-confidence, hard work, friendship, solidarity, sharing, peace, patriotism, success, scientific, secular, courage in the learning area "effective citizenship" were found; hospitality, responsibility, reliability, honesty, self-confidence, kindness, respect for differences, peace, and love, in the learning area "global connections." According to Schwartz (2015), although the nature and structure of values are universal, the importance individuals and groups give to values differ greatly. That is, individuals and groups have different value priorities or hierarchies. Each person has a multitude of values (e.g. success, safety, benevolence) that are important to varying degrees. A particular value may be very important to one person but not to another. In this context, value priorities for individuals and societies may change. And therefore, the density of the values given in the course books and the distribution of the values in the content of the social studies course book may also differ.

Successful value education is the process of adjusting intuition, encouraging reasoning, and developing skills and motivation for moral behavior. The aim of value education should not only be individuals who do not harm others, but to be moral (Lapsley & Narvaez 2006 cited in Narvaez, 2007). When the 4th grade social studies course book in Turkey is evaluated in general, scientific, importance of family, respect for elders, love, respect, tolerance, forgiveness, peace, success, honesty, courage, patriotism, benevolence, science, sharing, patience, love of nature, sensitivity to the nature, being healthy, helpfulness, justice, saving, equality, respect for differences, freedom, responsibility, self-confidence, hard work, friendship, solidarity, sharing, secularism, hospitality, reliability, and kindness have been the determined values. According to Kafadar (2019), giving the necessary importance to value education in teaching programs and course books can contribute to the training of individuals to acquire basic human values. Prencipe (2001) concluded that value education programs have a positive effect on students' acquisition of values. For this reason, importance should be given to gaining values course books textbooks and teaching programs.

## Recommendations

In the study, 4th grade social course book in Turkey was examined in terms of values. Values can be examined in course books at different grade levels in further studies. In the study, it was found that there is limited content in gaining some values. When the course books are being renewed, it may be better to enrich the content aimed at gaining many different values in terms of value education. In different studies to be conducted, value teaching approaches can be examined in course books. Again, in different studies, the course books of different countries can be examined in terms of value education.

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### Author Information

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**Tuğba Kafadar**

Erciyes University  
Erciyes University, Faculty of Education, Kayseri, Turkey  
Contact e-mail: [tugbakafadar@gmail.com](mailto:tugbakafadar@gmail.com)

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