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THE PANORAMA OF SOCIAL STUDIES EDUCATION IN TURKEY

ABSTRACT

The aim of this study is to identify the current status of Turkish Social Studies education in the context of primary, undergraduate and graduate levels. In order to reach this aim, three research questions which focus on all dimensions throughout the grades are addressed. The primary sources for this study consists of Turkish primary school Social Studies curriculum guidance books for 4-5th and 6-7th grades, "Teacher Training and Colleges of Education (1982-2007)" which was prepared by Turkish Council of Higher Education, and the 2010 Student Selection Examination Guidance. Finally, university/institute web pages were used to explore graduate Social Studies education. The results show that Turkish Social Studies Education in all grades are consistent with each other but need more regulation in order to minimize differences in their aims.

Keywords: Social Studies Education, Primary, Undergraduate, Graduate, Turkey

SOSYAL BİLGİLER EĞİTİMİNİN TÜRKİYE'DEKİ GENEL DURUMU

ÖZET

Bu çalışmanın amacı, Türkiye'de Sosyal Bilgiler Eğitiminin, ilköğretim, lisans ve yüksek lisans düzeylerinde genel durumunu incelemektir. Bu amaç doğrultusunda belirlenen üç seviyeye ilişkin alt problemler oluşturulmuştur. İlköğretim 4.-5. ve 6.-7. Sınıflar Sosyal Bilgiler Programları, YÖK tarafından hazırlanan "Öğretmen Yetiştirme ve Eğitim Fakülteleri (1982-2007)" ile 2010 Öğrenci Seçme ve Yerleştirme Kılavuzu temel kaynak olarak kullanılmıştır. Lisansüstü eğitimle ilgili bilgiler de üniversitelerin web sitelerinden temin edilmiştir. Sonuçlar Türkiye'de Sosyal Bilgiler eğitiminin bütün aşamalarında birbirlerine göre tutarlı olduğunu fakat mevcut sorunların giderilmesine yönelik çeşitli düzenlemelere ihtiyaç olduğunu göstermektedir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Sosyal Bilgiler Eğitimi, İlköğretim, Lisans, Lisansüstü, Türkiye

1. INTRODUCTION (GİRİŞ)

As in every society, Social Studies has a crucial importance for Turkey and the Turkish educational system. According to the Turkish Ministry of Education Social Studies "is a course, consisting of subjects from the disciplines of history, geography, economics, sociology, anthropology, psychology, philosophy, politics, law and civics that are combined under a unit or a theme to explore humans' interactions with their environment within the context of past, present and future so as to help people actualize their potential as a collective (MEB, 2006: 26)".

For centuries, Social Studies has been discussed by educators and has had a place (sometimes with a different name) in the Turkish educational system. There is scant information about when or where Social Studies began to be taught in the pre-republic period (before 29th October 1923), but it is claimed that even before the Turks adopted Islam they taught customs and some rules of social life to children. From the time of adopting Islam to the Tanzimat era (1839-1876) Social Studies was perceived as an instrument for teaching customs, Islamic values and morality (Sönmez, 1999; Sözer, 1998). With the Tanzimat era (1839-1876), the Ottoman Empire broadly turned its face to the West and carried out some educational reforms from a western, in particular French, perspective. Motivated by politics, the policy makers treated Social Studies and related courses such as history, geography and civics, with an ideological agenda. These courses were used by the Ottomans for creating loyal citizens and keeping different people together (Akyüz, 2001; Kaymakcı & Akdağ, 2010; Öztürk & Otluoğlu, 2003; Safran, 2008; Üstel, 2004).

In the republic period (after the establishing of republic on 29th October 1923), Social Studies maintained its importance. However, the authorities did introduce some reforms in curricula. For instance, the government revised and developed primary Social Studies curriculum eight times, in the years of 1924, 1926, 1936, 1948, 1962, 1968, 1998 and 2005. In this period, Social Studies programs were used to implement the ideology of the republican regime and to create loyal and good citizens based on republicanism which is one of Ataturk's principles (Other principles are populism, secularism, reformism, nationalism and statism). Social Studies education was affected by the ideology of country and internal events like the Turkish History Thesis -in which Ataturk and his committee tried to establish a sound basis and correct misunderstanding in Turkish history-, the 1960 and 1980 military coups and the military-influenced decisions on the 28th of February in 1997, and external events like the European Union process and developing good relationships with USA and other Western countries (Aktan, 2006; Ata, 2006; Kaymakcı & Akdağ, 2010; Üstel, 2004).

In current situation, Social Studies is being taught from 4th to 7th grades in primary schools including both elementary and middle schools. In high school, there is no specifically a course called Social Studies but the social science disciplines are taught separately such as history, geography, sociology etc. Also, there are four years of Social Studies teacher training programs in colleges of education at university level. Although Social Studies education has an important role and is deeply rooted in the Turkish educational system, there is little information informing those outside the Social Studies education community of the context and current status of Social Studies education at primary, undergraduate and graduate levels. What studies there are on the current status of Turkish primary Social Studies education (Akinoğlu, 2008a; 2008b), Aktan (2006), Ata (2006), Kaymakcı (2009), Koç & et. al. (2007), Küçükahmet

(2007), Nalçacı (2001), Yaşar (2005) and so on) are generally curriculum oriented. Likewise, there are some studies prepared on current status of Turkish university Social Studies education (Ata (2007), Çınar (2004), Özav (2001), Taş (2004), Yılmaz (2009), and so on), yet these are also generally focused on curriculum. Except for Akinoğlu's studies (2008a; 2008b), the others were local studies written in Turkish. Furthermore, the majority of studies could not reflect the actual situation and draw the picture of the relationship between the Turkish primary and university Social Studies education simultaneously. These studies, even taken together, are inadequate to inform the general community about what is going on about Social Studies education in Turkey in a clear, comprehensive fashion. For these reasons, examining the panorama of Turkish Social Studies education is an important issue, both for eliminating these deficiencies and for providing a baseline for later studies.

Within this framework, the aim of this study is to identify the current status of Turkish Social Studies education in the context of primary, undergraduate and graduate levels. In order to reach this aim, three research questions are addressed:

- What is the structure of Turkish primary Social Studies education?
- What is the structure of Turkish undergraduate Social Studies education?
- What is the structure of Turkish graduate Social Studies education?

2. RESEARCH SIGNIFICANCE (ÇALIŞMANIN ÖNEMİ)

The aim of this study is to identify the current status of Turkish Social Studies education in the context of primary, undergraduate and graduate levels. In order to reach this aim, three research questions which focus on all dimensions throughout the grades are addressed. The primary sources for this study consists of Turkish primary school Social Studies curriculum guidance books for 4-5th and 6-7th grades, "Teacher Training and Colleges of Education (1982-2007)" which was prepared by Turkish Council of Higher Education, and the 2010 Student Selection Examination Guidance. Finally, university/institute web pages were used to explore graduate Social Studies education. The results show that Turkish Social Studies Education in all grades are consistent with each other but need more regulation in order to minimize differences in their aims.

3. METHOD (YÖNTEM)

- **Research Design:** The present study aims to answer the research questions, gather in-depth data from documents, and investigate the what, why and how of teaching Social Studies in Turkey. Accordingly, qualitative methodology was used (Denzin & et. al., 2005). In this case, document analysis was employed to provide an overview of the subject and to do in-depth analysis on previous studies (Bowen, 2009; Yin, 2003).
- **Data Sources:** Primary school Social Studies curriculum guidance books for 4-5th and 6-7th grades were used as data sources. In addition, to study undergraduate Social Studies education, a book called "Teacher Training and Colleges of Education (1982-2007)" [in Turkish Öğretmen Yetiştirme ve Eğitim Fakülteleri (1982-2007)] prepared by Turkish Council of Higher Education, the 2010 Student Selection Examination Guidance (in Turkish 2010 ÖSYS Kılavuzu), and university/college web pages were employed.

Finally, to study graduate Social Studies education university/institute web pages were used.

- **Data Collection:** The data were collected in the fall semester of the 2010-2011 academic year. The data were gathered via three different document analysis forms prepared by the researchers (Berg, 1998). The first one was called "Primary School Social Studies Education Form". In this form, primary school Social Studies education in terms of learning areas, units, related disciplines, concepts, skills and values was tried to be classified. The second form was called "Undergraduate Social Studies Education Form". In this form, the grades, classes, types and descriptions of courses were classified. The last form was called "Graduate Social Studies Education Form". In this form, universities and the type of education were classified.

2.4. Data Analysis:

Content analysis to analyze the data was used, drawing up a list of coded categories and classifying each segment of transcribed data into one of these categories. Content analysis was used due to the fact that it helps researchers to work through large amounts of qualitative data in a systematic fashion in a way that permits in-depth analysis (Berg, 1998; Merriam, 2001). In analyzing the data, patterns of different categories and themes were identified. The analysis was done in Turkish so as not to lose the meaning, and then the categories and themes were translated into English.

4. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS (BULGULAR VE YORUMLAR)

- **Primary School Social Studies Education:** According to the guide (MEB, 2006), Turkish primary school Social Studies curriculum consists of three basics. These are concepts, skills and values which can be counted as the main pillars of the curriculum.

"Concept" (the abstract image of a subject in mind) has a distinct place in the educational sciences, especially in curriculum design (Doğanay, 2005: 269). The Social Studies curriculum (from 4th to 7th grade) includes almost 160 concepts in total. In the process of constructing these concepts, each of the social sciences has been included according to its percentage in the Social Studies curriculum (Bilgili, 2006: 39). In addition, concepts are categorized in three steps (beginner, intermediate, upper intermediate) in each grade and there is a determination of which concept should be taught in which grade. Each concept is classified based on the needs, interests and development levels of the students.

In the curriculum guide book, "skill" is defined as "the tendency of do something and being capable" which is planned to be acquired and mastered in the process of education. Skills in the Social Studies curriculum are listed below (MEB, 2005b: 47):

1. Research
2. Skills of information technology usage
3. Critical thinking
4. Skills of initiative
5. Communication
6. Decision making
7. Problem solving
8. Skills of using Turkish language accurately, effective and well
9. Creative thinking
10. Change and continuity perception
11. Empathy
12. Observation
13. Space perception
14. Social participation
15. Time and chronology perception

As can be seen, fifteen basic skills are placed in the curriculum. But first nine of these have been accepted in other

primary school curriculum as well; they are commonly used by Mathematics, Science, Turkish, Arts and others. However, the last six are the specific skills dominant in the Social Studies curriculum. They are also emphasized in the curriculum tables as "skills which will be directly taught" (Ata, 2006: 76).

The third element of the curriculum is called "value" which is defined as "beliefs, basic ethical principles or ideas which are accepted by most of the community as right in order to "maintain the unity and operation of the society". Some of the values are specifically emphasized as "values which will directly taught" captions in every units. Values in the Social Studies curriculum are also listed below (MEB, 2005b: 89):

- | | |
|---------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| 1. Being just | 11. Tolerance |
| 2. Appreciation of family unity | 12. Hospitality |
| 3. Independence | 13. Freedom |
| 4. Peace | 14. Appreciation of being healthy |
| 5. Scientific thinking | 15. Respect |
| 6. Being hardworking | 16. Love |
| 7. Group solidarity | 17. Responsibility |
| 8. Responsiveness | 18. Cleanliness |
| 9. Honesty | 19. Patriotism |
| 10. Aesthetics | 20. Benevolence |

"Acquisition", a new concept for Social Studies in Turkey, is another important concept in curriculum design. In the structure of the curriculum, "concepts," "skills" and "values" comprise acquisitions, defined as, "knowledge, skills and values proof of which are expected to be seen in the students through the experiences designed in the learning process" (MEB, 2006). Acquisitions are designed as flexible sentences that include some actions referring to the learning itself. Here is an example from the curriculum on the table 1 below:

Table 1. Acquisitions for the learning strand of "Individual and Society" taken part in the social studies curriculum for 4th to 7th grades (MEB, 2005a; MEB, 2005b)

(Tablo 1. 4., 5., 6. ve 7. Sosyal Bilgiler programındaki "Birey ve Toplum" öğrenme alanında yer alan kazanımlar)

4th Grade	5th Grade	6th Grade	7th Grade
1. Student recognizes and admits individual differences	1. Student determines his/her place in a variety of groups and institutions	1. Student realizes multidimensionality of events by setting off from near surroundings	1. Student compares to his/her attitudes and behaviors by realizing the positive and negative attitudes and behaviors affecting communication
2. Student notices the relationship of his/her feelings and thoughts	2. Student associates the groups he/she is in and roles belong to the groups	2. Student distinguishes fact and opinion	2. Student realizes the importance of the communication set among people.
3. Student expresses his/her feelings and thoughts towards different cases	3. Student associates the roles of the groups he/she involved and required rights and responsibilities of these roles	3. Student makes a research using scientific research steps	3. Student discusses the significance of mass communication means in interpersonal interaction

Tablo 1'in devamı			
4. Student respects others feelings and thoughts	4. Student expresses his/her rights as a child	4. Student advocates the solutions of a problem requiring rights, responsibility and freedom fundamentally	4. Student distinguishes the connection between the right to demand accurate information, the freedom of opinion and the freedom of mass communication
5. Student puts in chronological order of principal facts in his/her life		5. Student realizes the contribution of Social Studies to his/her development as an active citizen of Turkish Republic	5. Student interprets the concepts of freedom of mass communication and privacy rights within the framework of their relations to each other
6. Student deduces regarding his/her personal identity by analyzing the information on his/her official ID card.		6. Student exemplifies Atatürks' implementations with the aim of developing social sciences	6. Student offers proof that Atatürk was giving importance on communication

The number of the acquisitions may vary, according to the topic. As seen on table 1, when writing a student acquisition, certain verbs are preferred such as "recognize," "determine," "realize," "associate," "deduce," and "exemplify." The obvious reason for this can be the taxonomical design of Bloom. The curriculum designer is not restricted to these words, but the idea is to design curriculum for the students themselves. The "acquisition" itself places the student at the center of the education; there is no teacher mentioned in the acquisitions. This can be interpreted as a step on the way to student-centered education.

The other new concept which was brought by the new Turkish Social Studies curriculum is the concept of "learning strand." This term is defined as "the general structure organizes learning in which skills, themes and concepts are seen holistically" (MEB, 2005b: 96). When the curriculum examined, it can be seen that, learning strands are placed from 4th 7th grade, both vertically and horizontally. These strands are;

- Individual and Society
- Culture and Legacy
- People, Places and Environment
- Production, Distribution and Consumption
- Science, Technology and Society
- Groups, Institutions and Social Organizations
- Power, Governance and Society
- Global Connections
- Time, Continuity and Change (MEB, 2006).

Learning strands unify the topics of social sciences in a course sample. For instance history, geography, sociology, economics are basic social sciences fields that inform the Social Studies but they may all be represented in a single learning strand. In this way students learn the subject matter holistically, an approach which is also recommended by Gestalt psychology (Senemoğlu, 2010: 293).

Learning strands can be seen the basic themes of Social Studies curriculum. Strands are placed horizontally which help enhance the

spiral structure of the Social Studies curriculum in each grade. As it goes to higher grades, the subject gets more detailed.

Learning strands are distributed to the grades vertically and each grade consists of vertical learning units. This is displayed on table 2 below:

Table 2. Social Studies learning strands and units in grades (MEB, 2005b: 10-11)
(Tablo 2. Sosyal Bilgiler öğrenme alanları ve ünitelerinin sınıflara göre dağılımı)

Learning Strands	Fourth Grade Units	Fifth Grade Units	Sixth Grade Units	Seventh Grade Units
Individual and Society	I learn myself	I learn my rights	I learn Social Studies	Communication and human relationship
Culture and Legacy	I learn my past	All over Turkey	Turks on the silk road	Journey to the Turkish history
People, Places and Environment	The place we live	Let's learn our region	Life on the earth	Population of our country
Production, Distribution and Consumption	From production to consumption	Our products	Resources of our country	Economy and social life
Science, Technology and Society	Fortunately, there is	Dreams come true	Electronic Epoch	Science in time
Groups, Institutions and Social Organizations	All together	Working for the society	---	In order to be altogether
Power, Governance and Society	People and governance	A country, a flag	Adventure of democracy	Democracy alive
Global Connections	My friends out there	Our world	Our Turkey and the world	Intercountries' bridges
Time, Continuity and Change	This strand has no unit but it takes part in the other units			

- **Undergraduate Social Studies Education:** Social Studies education is a four year long B.A. degree in colleges of education throughout Turkish universities. This curriculum is a single form, so any university which has the department, has to follow this curriculum. Courses are defined in detail, and professors and faculty follow this curriculum table. The curriculum design which is being applied today was brought into use in 2004. There are four years in a typical Social Studies department. The first year courses are displayed on Table 3:

Table 3. First year (freshman) courses in social studies education departments

(Tablo 3. Sosyal bilgiler eğitimi bölümü birinci sınıf dersleri)

Type of Courses*		Course Title	Theory	Practice	Credit
SM	Fall Semester	Fundamentals of Social Studies	2	0	2
SM		Social Psychology	2	0	2
SM		Archeology	2	0	2
SM		Sociology	2	0	2
GCA		Turkish I: Written Expression	2	0	2
GCA		Computer - I	2	2	3
GCA		Ataturk's Principles and History of Turkish Revolution - I	2	0	2
PC	Spring Semester	Introduction to Educational Sciences	3	0	2
GCA		Foreign Language - I	3	0	3
SM		General Physical Geography	4	0	4
SM		Ancient History and Civilization	2	0	2
SM		Philosophy	2	0	2
SM		Economy	2	0	2
GCA		Turkish II: Oral Expression	2	0	2
GCA	Computer - II	2	2	3	
GCA	Ataturk's Principles and History of Turkish Revolution - II	2	0	2	
GCA	Foreign Language - II	3	0	3	
Total			40	4	41

As can be seen on table 3, in the first year experience of Turkish Social Studies pre-service education the curriculum is designed with general topics and courses such as "Computer", "Foreign language", "Turkish" and "Ataturk's Principles and History of Turkish Revolution". These courses are common in other teacher training pre-service curriculum as well. In addition, the curriculum includes some basic social sciences such as "Social Psychology", "Archeology", "Sociology", "Philosophy", and "Economy". These indicate that teacher candidates are being prepared gradually to be a Social Studies teacher.

In the first year students are prepared for general topics. When it comes to the higher grades, courses will be more specific. In this way the curriculum is designed to meet the needs of the Social Studies teacher candidates when they graduate. Indeed, undergraduate Social Studies curriculum courses are necessary to help students appreciate the situation of teaching Turkish and Turkish Literature on a global scale. Besides, a university program is expected to possess some universal characteristics when the students graduate. The second year courses are shown on table 4:

* Abbreviations used are; SM: Subject Matter Course, GCA: General C A Course, PC: Pedagogic Course

Table 4. Second year (sophomore) courses in social studies education departments

(Tablo 4. Sosyal bilgiler eğitimi bölümü ikinci sınıf dersleri)

Type of Courses		Course Title	Theory	Practice	Credit
SM	Fall Semester	Physical Geography of Turkey	2	0	2
SM		Pre-Islamic Turkish History and Culture	2	0	2
SM		Introduction to Political Science	2	0	2
SM		Basic Law	2	0	2
SM		Art and Aesthetics	2	0	2
GCA		Scientific Research Methods	2	0	2
PC		Educational Psychology	3	0	3
SM		Optional - I	2	0	2
GCA		Optional - I	2	0	2
SM		Spring Semester	General Human and Economic Geography	4	0
SM	Anthropology		2	0	2
SM	Medieval History		4	0	4
SM	Science, Technology, and Social Change		2	0	2
SM	Civics		2	0	2
GCA	Turkish History of Education		2	0	2
PC	Teaching Principles and Methods		3	0	3
PC	Optional - I		2	0	2
SM	Optional - II		2	0	2
Total			42	0	42

The second year of education contains more specific courses than the first year. History courses especially are put in a chronological order. Throughout the curriculum, history based courses begin with ancient civilizations and continue to the current date by the 4th year of education. In addition, second students start to choose optional courses beside obligatory ones. Most of the courses in this curriculum are obligatory; a student will not graduate if they are not taken. But the optional courses permit the students some choice and self-direction in the shaping of their education.

In the third year experience the subjects are harder and courses are more specific than the first two years. Third year courses are displayed on table 5:

Table 5. Third year (junior) courses in social studies education departments

(Tablo 5. Sosyal bilgiler eğitimi bölümü üçüncü sınıf dersleri)

Type of Courses		Course Title	Theory	Practice	Credit
SM	Fall Semester	Ottoman History and Civilization - I	2	0	2
SM		Human and Economic Geography of Turkey	2	0	2
SM		Modern and Contemporary Ages History	2	0	2
SM		Human Rights and Democracy	2	0	2
SM		Countries' Geography	2	0	2
GCA		Community Services' Practice	1	2	2
PC		Instructional Technologies and Material Design	2	2	3
PC		Classroom Management	2	0	2
GCA		Optional - II	2	0	2
SM		Spring Semester	Ottoman History and Civilization - II	2	0
SM	Reviewing of Oral and Written Literature in Social Studies		2	0	2
SM	Human Relationships and Communication		2	0	2
SM	Modern World History		2	0	2
SM	Political Geography		2	0	2
PC	Measurement and Assessment		3	0	3
PC	Specific Teaching Methods - I		2	2	3
PC	Turkish Educational System and School Management		2	0	2
GCA	Optional - III	2	0	2	
Total			36	6	39

The third year of the curriculum includes more history of the modern ages than the first two years. In this year, courses are more specific.

The fourth year experience is displayed on table 6:

Table 6. Fourth year (senior) courses in social studies education departments

(Tablo 6. Sosyal bilgiler eğitimi bölümü dördüncü sınıf dersleri)

Type of Courses		Course Title	Theory	Practice	Credit
SM	Fall Semester	Turkish Republic History - I	2	0	2
SM		Reviewing of Social Studies Textbooks	2	2	3
SM		Current Problems of World	2	0	2
SM		Specific Teaching Methods - II	2	2	3
PC		Curriculum Development	2	0	2
PC		Special Education	2	0	2
PC		Teaching Experience	1	4	3
SM	Spring Semester	Turkish Republic History - II	2	0	2
SM		Social Project Development	1	2	2
SM		Creative Drama in Social Studies	2	2	3
PC		Counseling	3	0	3
PC		Teaching Practice	2	6	5
PC		Optional - II	2	0	2
TOTAL			25	18	34

In the last year of B.A. education, students are engaged in more practice than in the preceding years. On table 6, it can be seen that there are fewer theoretical courses than in the other years and more practical work. In the last year, student candidates are introduced to real classrooms and real students through "teaching experience" and "teaching practice." There are also service learning opportunities done by "social project development". These pedagogical formation courses give priority to vocational knowledge and skills and to the real school environment, in addition to the theoretical knowledge. It can also be seen that pedagogical courses follow an order throughout the 4 years. They start with psychology of learning ends with "teaching practice". So, teacher education starts from theory and moves toward practice.

As it is noticed, history and geography are the basic courses and given special care and detail in the curriculum. This fact also affects the general structuring of the faculty members in the Social Studies education programs of the colleges. Their careers are coming mostly from either history or geography. Post-graduate education also structured in this way.

This curriculum has to meet the primary school teacher's needs also. So the college curriculum can be compared to the learning strands. Ata's (2007) comparison of these learning strands to the undergraduate courses is displayed on table 7:

Table 7. Comparison of learning strands and the courses in B.A.D
 (Tablo 7. Lisans dersleri ile öğrenme alanlarının karşılaştırılması)

Learning Strands	Courses in the Social Studies Education Graduation Curriculum
Individual and Society	Fundamentals of Social Studies, Scientific Research Methods, Social Psychology, Philosophy, Community Services' Practice, Human Relationships and Communication, Reviewing of Social Studies Textbooks, Social Project Development, Creative Drama in Social Studies
Culture and Legacy	Archeology, Ancient History and Civilization, Pre-Islamic Turkish History and Culture, Art and Aesthetics, Anthropology, Medieval History, Ottoman History and Civilization - I, Modern and Contemporary Ages History, Ottoman History and Civilization - II, Reviewing of Oral and Written Literature in Social Studies, Modern World History, Turkish Republic History - I, Turkish Republic History - II
People, Places and Environment	General Physical Geography, Physical Geography of Turkey, General Human and Economic Geography, Human and Economic Geography of Turkey, Political Geography
Production, Distribution and Consumption	Economy
Time, Continuity and Change	This strand has no specific course but it takes part in the other courses
Science, Technology and Society	Science, Technology, and Social Change
Groups, Institutions and Social Organizations	Sociology
Power, Governance and Society	Introduction to Political Science, Basic Law, Civics, Human Rights and Democracy
Global Connections	Countries' Geography, Current Problems of World

As can be seen on table 7, undergraduate courses mostly relate to the "Individual and Society", "Culture and Legacy" and "People, Places and Environment" learning strands. The other learning strands are not emphasized like the first three throughout the undergraduate curriculum. The reason for this may be that the "Social Studies is as a combination of social sciences (MEB, 2006)" must still be going on. Or history and geography are the two social sciences most often taught in the classroom. In light of this panoramic view of the curriculum, notwithstanding that the current curriculum is the best one so far in the republican era in Turkey; it appears that there are still some changes needed.

In Social Studies teacher training programs, the number and duration of practice courses have been increased compared to the previous programs (Ata, 2007). As a result, prospective teachers first get the opportunity to improve their professional skills by doing small-scale practices (teaching by using various methods, questioning, group work, material design, testing, measurement and evaluation, attending meetings, providing students with individual help, classroom observation, etc.). In the later semesters, they can move to experiences of teaching independently.

- **Graduate Social Studies Education:** According to the data gathered from the BHE (Board of Higher Education), there are 94 state universities, 34 private universities and 4 independent colleges in Turkish higher education. But only 44 of them have

"Social Studies Education" departments. These universities are listed on Table 8:

Table 8. Degrees of social studies education in the universities of Turkey

(Tablo 8. Türkiye'deki üniversitelerde sosyal bilgiler eğitimi bölümleri)

	University	Province	B.A.D	M.S.D	Ph.D.
1	Abant İzzet Baysal University	Bolu	√	√	.
2	Adıyaman University	Adıyaman	√	√	.
3	Adnan Menderes University	Aydın	√	√	.
4	Afyon Kocatepe University	Afyon	√	√	.
5	Ahi Evran University	Kırşehir	√	√	.
6	Ağrı İbrahim Çeçen University	Ağrı	√	.	.
7	Aksaray University	Aksaray	√	.	.
8	Amasya University	Amasya	√	.	.
9	Anadolu University	Eskişehir	√	√	.
10	Ankara University	Ankara	√	√	.
11	Atatürk University	Erzurum	√	√	√
12	Balıkesir University	Balıkesir	√	√	.
13	Celâl Bayar University	Manisa	√	√	.
14	Cumhuriyet University	Sivas	√	.	.
15	Çukurova University	Adana	√	√	.
16	Dicle University	Diyarbakır	√	.	.
17	Dokuz Eylül University	İzmir	√	√	.
18	Dumlupınar University	Kütahya	√	√	.
19	Ege University	İzmir	√	.	.
20	Erciyes University	Kayseri	√	.	.
21	Erzincan University	Erzincan	√	√	.
22	Fırat University	Elazığ	√	√	√
23	Gazi University	Ankara	√	√	√
24	Gaziosmanpaşa University	Tokat	√	.	.
25	Giresun University	Giresun	√	.	.
26	İnönü University	Malatya	√	.	.
27	İstanbul University	İstanbul	√	.	.
28	Kafkas University	Kars	√	√	.
29	Karadeniz Technical University	Trabzon	√	.	.
30	Kastamonu University	Kastamonu	√	√	.
31	Kilis 7 Aralık University	Kilis	√	.	.
32	Marmara University	İstanbul	√	√	√
33	Mehmet Akif Ersoy University	Burdur	√	.	.
34	Muğla University	Muğla	√	.	.
35	Niğde University	Niğde	√	√	.
36	Ondokuz Mayıs University	Samsun	√	.	.
37	Pamukkale University	Denizli	√	√	.
38	Rize University	Rize	√	.	.
39	Sakarya University	Sakarya	√	.	.
40	Selçuk University	Konya	√	√	.
41	Trakya University	Edirne	√	.	.
42	Uludağ University	Bursa	√	.	.
43	Uşak University	Uşak	√	√	.
44	Yüzüncü Yıl University	Van	√	.	.
Total			44	23	4

As shown on table 8, as of 2010, there are 44 universities which have the B.A. degree, 23 universities that have the M.A. degree and 4 universities that have Ph.D. degrees. This information was gathered by examining the web sites of all these universities, and the guide for

Higher education in Turkey. The universities which have Social Studies departments are not focused on one city or university; it is spread equally among universities. The number of programs has increased steadily beginning of the year 2000.

Although B.A. degrees are given by individual program faculties, M.S. and Ph.D. degrees are given by either the "Institute of Educational Sciences" or the "Institute of Social Sciences" in the universities. Also all the programs are connected under "Primary School Education" departments.

Post-graduate education is on a fast track for development in Turkey. Most of the M.S. degrees have opened in the last 10 years, and their numbers are increasing every year. This is a very good sign for the future of the Social Studies in Turkey.

Although B.A. degree curriculum is standard all over the country, post graduation education is entirely dependent on the faculty itself. Faculty makes the course list and students take them.

5. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS (SONUÇ VE ÖNERİLER)

The purpose of this paper was to examine Social Studies education in all its aspects in Turkey. It was done by examining primary grades (4th to 7th grade), under graduation, and post graduation degrees.

The basic coordination of these three levels of education has occurred as a result of the 2004 primary school and 2006 undergraduate curriculum changes. The commonalities of these three can be summarized as follows:

- Although primary school curriculum is built on learning strands, undergraduate and postgraduate curriculum is built basically on the structure of the various social sciences. This is a requirement of the students' ages. Primary school students should take the reality as a whole, as gestalt psychologists emphasize.
- Undergraduate curriculum courses mostly meet the needs of the primary school Social Studies curriculum.
- Although there is an emphasis in the primary school grades on skills and values, there is no specific course to teach them; they are included in some courses such as "Specific Instruction Methods I and II".
- Learning strands such as "Production, Distribution and Consumption" and "Groups, Institutions and Social Organizations" has the least course in Undergraduate Social Studies curriculum. Regulations about this need to be carried out by Board of Higher Education.
- Although the primary school Social Studies curriculum has been designed with the learning strands, it can be said that teacher education is not designed for learning strands but instead for the disciplines of social sciences. Teacher education curriculum has been prepared to conform to the teacher competency table of Ministry of National Education. But the Ministry of National Education should work more on this to narrow the gap. This will help improve the Social Studies education in Turkey.

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