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# Multi Directional Investigation of Parents' Views on the Social Studies Course

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Abstract: This study was carried out to determine the opinions of the parents of 5th, 6th and 7th grade students about the social studies course. For this, in-depth interview technique, one of the qualitative research methods, was used as the research design. The study group consists of six parents from Adiyaman Gerger Coban Pinari Secondary School, four parents from Adiyaman Kahta Kubilay Secondary School, four parents from Adıyaman Kahta Gazi Secondary School, 5 parents from Adıyaman Merkez Biraralık Secondary School and one parent from Istanbul Orhangazi Secondary School. As a data collection tool, four open-ended questions were asked to the parents. For the analysis of the data, the related data were interpreted using the descriptive analysis method. During the interviews, it was stated that the teachers should improve themselves in line with their branches, make the children love the social studies lesson with various activities, organize museum-trip programs, and inform the parents about their children at regular intervals. Expectations have emerged such as exemplifying social studies with every stage of daily life, providing a constructivist education-centered programme, ensuring that they get to know the city by visiting and seeing, raising students in accordance with the accumulation of culture from the past, raising individuals who know the responsibilities brought by their geographical location and protect their homeland and nation. Some of the parents also revealed that their students give the necessary importance to the social studies lesson, love the lesson teacher, put what they have learned into practice, and look forward to the next lesson with excitement. In addition, it has emerged that they see the education-training system only as preparation for exams, the need to increase the weekly course hours and to give the importance given to numerical courses to the social studies course.

Keywords: Social Studies, Parents' opinions, Qualitative research, İn-depth interview.

# Introduction

Along with the changing and developing technology, great and radical changes have occurred in today's education system (Benli, 2010). These changes have manifested themselves in all areas of life. Together with these, changes become necessitated in the fields of education, social, cultural, economic, political, health, sports and art (Beldağı, Özdemir & Nalçacı, 2017). Education is the most important mechanism that sustains an individual, society and state. It is the basic foundation that meets all kinds of needs of societies and ensures their continuation (Duru, 2014).

Considering the history of the Turkish Education and Training System, one can see significant changes and developments (Ayaydın & Yıldız Ayaydın, 2016). Previously, traditional learning environment was presented to students with the related traditional methods. In this system, students try to learn information by rote, through passive learning, take the information as it is without any criticism; namely one-way interaction, result-oriented studies, whereas the new Education-Training System foresees an acquisition model via constructivist education,

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active studentship, teacher-student, and student-centered methods, student-student interactive communication, information questioning, critical perspective, product+process evaluation (Hersan & Kabapınar, 2008).

Redding's (2000) book *Parents and Learning Education Practices Series-2* considers parents as the child's first and strong teachers. Taking into account the child's learning habits, attitude to school, social relations and academic development, the book states that when teachers and families understand each other's expectations, students do their best at the time of their communication. In other words, the communication consisting of the teacher and parent channel both informs the families between the school and the family and it offers families an opportunity for communication. He also states that not every family is equal in socio-economic terms and this inequality reveals three types of family structure:

#### **Distressed Families:**

These families are families living in poverty, oppressed by the needs of daily life. They have limited parenting abilities. They lack social relationships and do not have good parenting models, and they shy away from teachers and see school as a place for bad news.

### **Child Centered Families:**

Such families see school and reading as a process that will help their child's economic situation. In these families, the fear that the school is inadequate for their children often prevails. They lead families. Schools have constructive duties. They provide an opportunity for cooperation between families and contribute to the personal and academic development of both their own children and other children.

### **Parent-Centred Families:**

These families, who are constantly busy due to their profession, value school and reading, but sometimes they neglect to take care of their children's lives because of their careers and personal interests. This kind of family places their children in the best school and entrust their children to people they see as professional and competent. These families share the material and moral opportunities they have with their children and their children are supposed to be responsible for this.

The competencies included in the 2018 Social Studies Curriculum also aim to train individuals in personalities with integrated knowledge, skills and behaviours. The competencies that students will need in their personal, social, academic and business lives at both national and international levels have been determined within the framework of the Turkish Qualifications Framework (TYC). Accordingly, eight key competencies have been identified within the framework of the Turkish Qualifications. These competencies are:

- 1. Communication in the mother tongue
- 2. Communication in foreign languages
- 3. Mathematical competence and basic competencies in science/technology
- 4. Digital competence
- 5. Learning to learn
- 6. Social and citizenship related competencies
- 7. Taking initiatives and entrepreneurship
- 8. Cultural awareness and expression

### Special Objectives of the Social Studies Course Teaching Program

In accordance with the General Objectives and Basic Principles of Turkish National Education expressed in the National Education Basic Law No. 1739 given as follows: with the Social Studies Curriculum, students;

1. As a citizen of the Republic of Turkey, they should grow up as citizens who love their homeland and nation, know and use their rights, fulfil their responsibilities, and have national consciousness,

2. Understanding the place of Atatürk's principles and revolutions in the social, cultural and economic development of the Republic of Turkey and their willingness to preserve democratic, secular, national and

contemporary values,

3. The fact that the rules of law are binding on everyone, that all persons and organizations know on the grounds that they are equal before the law,

4. Understanding the basic elements and processes that make up Turkish culture and history, and recognizing that the cultural heritage that ensures the formation of national consciousness should be protected and developed,

5. To explain the interaction between man and the environment by recognizing the general geographical features of the environment and the world in which he lives and to improve their skills of deciphering space,

6. Realizing the limitations of the natural environment and resources, they try to protect natural resources within the framework of environmental sensitivity and have a sustainable understanding of the environment,

7. They have the ability to think critically as individuals, who know the ways to get accurate and reliable information,

8. Understanding the basic concepts of the economy and understanding the place of the national economy in development and international economic relations,

9. They believe in the importance of work in public life and that every profession is necessary and respected,

10. By questioning the historical evidence of different periods and places, they determine the similarities and differences between people, objects, events and phenomena, decipher the change and continuity,

11. To use information and communication technologies consciously by understanding the development process of science, technology, and its effects on social life,

12. Observing scientific ethics in accessing, using and producing information based on scientific thinking,

13. Ability to use basic communication skills and basic concepts and methods of social sciences to regulate social relations and solve the problems faced by them,

14. They believe in the importance of participation, express opinions on solving personal and social problems,

15. Understanding the historical processes of the concepts of human rights, national sovereignty, democracy, secularism, republic and their impact on modern-day Turkey, they organize their lives according to democratic rules.

16. To know the importance and ways of being a virtuous person by adopting national, spiritual values and universal values,

17. Showing sensitivity to issues of interest to their country and the world,

18. becoming aware of their physical, emotional characteristics, interests, desires and abilities as a free individual (MEB, 2018).

#### Considerations in the Application of the Social Studies Curriculum

1. Social Studies learning areas: Social sciences such as history, geography, economics, sociology, anthropology, psychology, philosophy, political science and law and human rights, citizenship and democracy are discussed in an integrated manner. Subjects should not be treated separately as history, geography, human rights and citizenship, but with an interdisciplinary approach.

2. The basic principles of Social Studies teaching such as "locality, timeliness, interdisciplinary, reflective inquiry, past-present-future connection, time-continuity-change and flexibility" should be taken into account in the realization of the outcomes. In terms of these emphasized principles, the processing times can be changed when necessary.

3. The understanding of "social studies as social sciences" and "social studies as reflective thinking" should be given importance. The scientific methods used by social scientists (geographers, historians, etc.) should be introduced to students. Making use of events inside and outside the school, students should be frequently compared with real-life problems and contradictory situations, and they should be encouraged to reflect on the social problems they encounter.

4. In the programme, values and skills are directly associated with achievements. However, in order for value and skill teaching to be handled within the framework of lifelong learning, these values or skills should also be associated with different acquisition and learning areas that are deemed appropriate.

5. Concept teaching has an important place in the curriculum. For this reason, classifications and different concept teaching approaches should be considered in concept teaching. It should be helped to eliminate ambiguity, conceptual confusion and misconceptions.

6. National religious holidays can be considered and national consciousness can be developed by making use of important events, days and weeks consisting of local private segments.

7. Make use of activities to benefit from out-of-school activities in Social Studies education. Like this school, the school is old museum (like the school, the school is old museum (like a school).

8. Stories should be supported with literary products from the Social Studies course by making use of genres such as epics, tales, proverbs, folk tales, folk songs and poems. Targeting at students, the events were passed

without mentioning literary products such as novels, historical novels, stories, travel writings and jokes. In addition, appropriate uses should be supported by modern art such as painting, music, miniature, engraving, hat, sculpture, theatre, and cinema.

9. Up-to-date and comparative evaluation of current views on achievements, problems related to different discussions, evaluation, comparison and examination.

10. End-user needs to meet the new (digital commerce, state as media-State, virtual commerce, media, etc.) and social needs (digital and identity wounding, personal self, cyber fraud etc.) related to citizenship and rights depending on technology, bullying, etc.) occurs for lectures and extracurricular activities about people developing biblical digital identities (Kabapınar, Öztürk & Hersan, 2004).

The first social area of the individual as of the moment of birth is the family. Therefore, the family environment, which is the first area where the individual lives, is the first educational-teaching environment in the field of education as well as in every field of the individual. The importance of the family in the formation of the child's personality, self-knowledge and realization is an undeniable fact (Kuş & Çelikkaya, 2010). The child should receive the support of the family at every education level. It is important that the family be in face-to-face contact with the students' teachers at regular intervals (Kılıç, 2009). The importance of the course should be conveyed to the individual at every level of education, especially since the Social Studies course enables the individual to learn the society's own culture and values, art, language, traditions, history, past and future, and to adapt to all these fields. Because Social Studies course, as the name suggests, is the course that contributes the most to the socialization of the social individual and society (Palaz, Kılcan, Akbaba & Çepni, 2015).

Looking at the target achievements of the Social Studies Course Program, different areas of intelligence are mentioned, and students are expressed as individuals with different and unique learning styles. It is mentioned that rather than the uniform transfer of information by the teacher, the information is structured by the student (Kıldan, 2012). Students are expected to think in a multifaceted way in the form of learning a different perspective, critical thinking, structuring and learning from different perspectives (Keskin & Yapıcı, 2008). It is also aimed that the student uses research methods to gain importance instead of receiving and memorizing information as it is. In order to achieve this goal, it is concluded that the teacher, parent, and student trilogy must support and complete each other effectively. Because in order to create a so-called school triangle, the concepts of teacher, parent and student need to contribute to each other and act in cooperation. The formation of the quality and continuity of education, the satisfaction of the needs of the student in all areas can only be completed by this cooperation (Eskicumalı, Erdoğan & Aslan, 2010). This will pave the way for a student to have a healthy student life, a successful education story, but also gain a positive identity, which is of great importance. At the same time, student will be able to grow up as a highly motivated and responsible individual. Besides, the socio-economic structure, cultural values of parents, educational background of parentsprofessions, their behaviour toward their children, their children's communication with their friends, teachers and the expectations of the student's successful communication with their related families is crucial for them to undergo a training period (Binicioglu, 2010).

However, when the application part is examined, it has been observed that there are differences between the target achievements of the Social Studies Curriculum and the applications. We can clearly see this from the parent interview forms. It causes students to be in a constant race and competition due to the necessity of the changing. In terms of socialization, we see that an education application that is purely knowledge-loaded, examoriented, oriented to numerical courses in order to settle in the desired high school. Yet, an asocial student profile emerges, through not only history, culture, traditions and customs, but also through Kemalist thought system, language, social relations (Houser, 1995). As a result, it is clear that the future of the students is shaped not by their own wishes, abilities, interests and efforts, but mostly by their social environment, parental attitudes, and the necessities brought by the changing technology. It is extremely important for parents to cooperate with the educational institution so that the goals and achievements of the Social Studies curriculum can be applied to students in a proper manner. Accordingly, expectations arisen in parent-school cooperation should be met in a way that complements each other and eliminates probable deficiencies (Taşyürek & Göksu, 2016).

# Method

The research pattern was applied using in-depth interview technique from qualitative research methods. The sample of the study consisted of six parents from Adiyaman Gerger Shepherd Spring Secondary School, four parents from Adiyaman Kahta Kublai Secondary School, four parents from Adiyaman Kahta Gazi Secondary School, 5 parents from Adiyaman Central Secondary School and one parent from Istanbul Orhangazi Secondary

School. All interviews conducted during the research were carried out face-to-face by the researcher. All the details have been taken into consideration and appropriately created by the researcher for the properness of the interview environment; the comfort of the parents participating in the interview. The researcher stated that the purpose of the study was to get parents' opinions about the Social Studies course. During the interview, it was emphasized that the parents were comfortable and friendly, and for this, they were in the mood for a conversation. As a data collection tool, parents were asked the following four open-ended questions:

1. What are your expectations from Social Studies teachers, what should teachers do to make these expectations come true?

2.Can you tell us a little about what comes to mind when you say Social Studies class?

3. When you evaluate your student, can you explain whether your student gives the necessary importance to the Social Studies course or not?

4. Can you tell us about the adequacy of education and training of the Social Studies course?

### **Results and Discussion**

1. What are your expectations from Social Studies teachers, what should teachers do to make these expectations come true? Their Answers to the Question are given as follows;

PARENT 1: "In fact, I can answer this in two ways: First, I expect him to gain the basic knowledge that he needs to learn according to his class in the curriculum of the Ministry of Education. Secondly, I would like him to be able to interpret historical events. I would like him to be able to interpret the causes and consequences of anything that has been done for himself."

PARENT 2: "Teachers need to make museum trips, organize, and prepare individual exams for students. They should like the lesson. Social Knowledge should be comprehended by the student."

PARENT 3: "If the Social Studies teacher tells the lesson by using everyday life as an example, it will be permanent in the student's mind. In order to do this, it is necessary to take into account the interests of this age group. Since the final goal is the LGS (Turkish High School Entrance System) exam, it is necessary to consolidate this with multiple-choice questions.

PARENT 4+,..... PARENT 20 also answered in this direction.

The first question asked to parents during the interviews is "What are your expectations from Social Studies teachers, what should teachers do to make these expectations come true? "as directed in the figure. The encodings, frequencies and interpretation of the responses given by the parents are shown below in Table 1.

Table 1. "What are your expectations from Social Studies teachers, what should teachers do to make these expectations come true?"

1. Question Coding	f
a. Museum, Excursion	2
b. History, Culture	2
c. MEB Curriculum	2
d. History	4
e. An Example of Everyday Life	5
f. Self-Development in Their Field	2
g. To Enable Students to Read	2
h. Affiliation to the State	2
i. Difference	4
Total of opinions	25

Table: 1 Interpretation: 2 of our parents who answered the first question answered "Museum, Trip", 2 "History, Culture", 2 "Ministry of Education Curriculum", 4 "History", 5 "Sampling with Daily Life", 2 "Self-Improvement in Their Field", 2 "Ensuring that Students Read", 2 "Being Connected to the State", 4 "Difference".

1. Can you tell us a little about what comes to mind when you say Social Studies class? Their Answers to the Question

PARENT 1: "When I say Social Studies course, I think of things such as our historical past, our lives as a society, studying events that are turning points for society, understanding, drawing a path according to it"

PARENT 2: "Everything about life is coming. There comes a consciousness of history, geography, way of life, society."

PARENT 3: "It is necessary to create awareness of history for our children. Thanks to this, we can create the power of interpretation that occurs in everyday life in children. Logic in a verbal sense is of greater importance than other courses in this regard, as it will improve the power of interpreting questions."

PARENT 4+,..... PARENT 20 also answered in this direction.

Table 2. "What comes to your mind when you say Social Studies course, can you talk about it a little? "

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2. Question Coding	f
a. History	11
b. Geography	5
c. Life Style	2
d. Life, Experiences (What we have experienced)	2
e. Past	6
f .Culture	5
g. Society	8
h. Values	2
i. Ataturkism, Mustafa Kemal	2
j. Environment	3
Total of opinions	46

The second question asked to parents during the interviews is "What comes to your mind when you say Social Studies course, can you talk about it a little?" as directed in the figure. The encodings, frequencies and interpretation of the responses given by the parents are shown below in Table 2.

Table: 2 COMMENTS: question 11 the school parents who responded to the second "Date", 5, "Geography", 2% "lifestyle", 2, "Life, Our experiences", 6' SI "history", 5, "culture", 8 "Society", 2' si "Values", 2% "Atatürk, Mustafa Kemal", 3 "Environmental" as are answered.

Their Answers to the Question; 3. When you evaluate your student, can you explain whether your student gives the necessary importance to the Social Studies course or not?

PARENT1: "He gives the necessary importance to the course as a study. Because he is taking notes against it. In general, he is not interested in historical events, history. He is not interested in the curriculum because he does not find it suitable for him."

PARENT 2: "It doesn't show. Because his interest in school is a little low. I think the classroom environment, the group of friends and the teacher are not reaching out enough."

PARENT 3: "Due to the necessity of the system, the Social Studies course cannot reach a more important point than mathematics or Turkish. After these courses, along with the Science course 3. It is lining up."

PARENT 4+,..... PARENT 20 also answered in this direction.

The third question asked to parents during the interviews is "Can you explain whether your student gives the necessary importance to the Social Studies course when you evaluate your student?" as directed in the figure. The encodings, frequencies and interpretation of the responses given by the parents are shown below in Table 3.

Table: 3 INTERPRETATION: 3 of our parents who answered the third question answered "Putting What They have Learned into their Lives", 12 answered "Caring about Social Information", 4 answered "Interest", 3 answered "Exam", 8 answered "Not caring about Social Information", 5 answered "Knowledge", 3 answered "Grade".

Table 3. "Can you explain whether your student gives the necessary importance to the Social Studies course when you evaluate your student?"

3. Question Coding	f
a. Applying What You Learned	3
b. Giving importance to Social Studies	12
c. Interest	4
d. Exam	3
e. Disregard for Social Studies	8
f. Information	5
g. Note	3
Total of opinions	42

3. Can you tell us about the adequacy of education and training of the Social Studies course? Their Answers to the Question

PARENT1: "The Social Studies course has an excess of information in the courses included in the education and training. I think some subjects are heavy according to the class level. In fact, it would be better if historical topics are shown with videos".

PARENT 2: "Social Studies is one of the main courses. I think that it is not given enough importance in education and training. The aim of this course is to create public awareness. I find the class time insufficient and the given class time is not efficient enough. I think the reason is that the child only creates learning in a classroom environment."

PARENT 3: "In the current education and training system, children are filled with simpler phrases and readymade information, and not on the development of children's interpretative power. In any way, children are not allowed to research, study topics and connect with each other. Education will be more efficient if a system is created that will prevent this."

PARENT 4+,..... PARENT 20 also answered in this direction.

The fourth question asked to parents during the interviews is "Can you tell us about the adequacy of the education and training of the Social Studies course?" as directed in the figure. The encodings, frequencies and interpretation of the responses given by the parents are shown below in Table: 4.

Table 4 "Can you tell us about the adequacy of the education and training of the Social Studies course?"

4. Question Coding		f
a. There Are Few Weekly Class Hou	rs	7
b. Insufficient Vision of the Education	on and Training System	15
c. Adequate Vision of the Education	and Training System	4
d. Other Courses are More Importan	t (Science, Mathematics, English)	3
e. Not Giving the Necessary Importa	nce to the Social Studies Course	3
f. To See the Social Studies Book and	nd Its Teaching Adequately	4
g. Insufficient View of the Social Str	idies Book and Its Teaching	13
Total of opinions	C	42
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Table: 4 COMMENTS: Question 7 the fourth parents who responded to the school " to be a minimum of hours per week ", 15% " the education system is Inadequate Vision ", 4 "Adequate vision of the education system ", 3 " be more important for other subjects (Science, math, English ) ", 3, " should not be given due importance to social studies ", 4 " book learning social studies and adequate Vision ", 13% " book learning social studies and inadequate Vision " are answered.

## Conclusion

As a result of the interviews, teachers are expected to develop themselves in line with their branches, to make children love Social Studies with various activities, to make museum-trip programs, to develop children in every aspect, to inform parents about their children at regular intervals, and to exemplify Social Studies from every stage of daily life. On the other hand, it has been revealed that they expect a constructivist education-centered education rather than a rote logic, the students get to know the city by visiting and see the city they live in, they expect the students to be educated with the cultural accumulation from the past to the present, the teachers to transfer the responsibilities brought by the geographical location of the country to the students, and to raise citizens who take care of their homeland and their nation without worrying about grades. When it comes to Social Studies, parents think of history, culture, tradition, customs, war, past, geography, life itself, preparation for life, homeland, nation, state, human relations, economy, knowledge, cleanliness, communication, Mustafa Kemal, Çanakkale War, Social Studies. teacher, work, personal characteristics, social structure, happiness, peace, socialization, our social values, heroes of a country, life before Christ, religion of a country, family, events that are turning points for a society, students and everything about life. Half of the parents' opinions are that their students do not give the necessary importance to the Social Studies course, that Social Studies is not as important as Mathematics or Turkish, Science courses due to the necessity of the LGS (High School Entrance System) exam, that they focus more on numerical courses, that they use their intelligence to reach high school, cannot socialize, that they cannot socialize, that they use their national culture. stated that he did not learn enough about his history, did not have information about his socio-economic status, saw social studies as unnecessary and complex, and therefore did not study for this course. Half of the other parents' opinions revealed that they gave the necessary importance to the Social Studies lesson, loved the teacher of the lesson, implemented what they learned at school, worked with various materials to reach information. Apart form this, the weekly lesson hours are expected to be increased since the student eagerly awaited the next lesson, and the subjects be included that interest them in their life. In addition, the parents said that they see the education system only as preparation for exams, that the course hours are insufficient, that the course should be done with practical travel and museum programs, that Social Studies are seen as a course that is life itself without worrying about grades, that the importance given to numerical courses (Mathematics, Science) and the course revealed that the time should be given to the Social Studies course as well.

### **Recommendations**

As a result of the interviews with the parents, when we compare the target achievements of the Social Studies Curriculum with the application parts, it is seen that there are differences between them. Teachers, parents and students should be made aware that the teacher-parent-student trio should be in cooperation, especially in the application part, in order for students to have a successful and healthy development in all areas of their lives, and that it should not be neglected. In addition, students and parents should be aware that not only numerical lessons are important in life, but that every lesson is important and valuable.

### **Scientific Ethics Declaration**

The authors declare that the scientific ethical and legal responsibility of this article published in EPESS journal belongs to the authors.

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