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Opinions of Social Studies Teachers on Turkish Education System: Current Problems and Suggested Solutions

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Abstract: The value given to social sciences in developed societies is increasing day by day. It is a discipline that deals with the individual, social life and events from different perspectives with a scientific approach; It is important for a better understanding of the individual and social events. This work; This study was carried out in order to examine the problems faced by social studies teachers in the social studies lesson and other factors related to the social studies lesson in line with the views of the social studies teachers. In the research, it was aimed to reveal the existing or past problems as they are, therefore, a widely used qualitative design based on consultation was used. This research was conducted with 50 social studies teachers in primary schools in Mardin province, district and village affiliated to the Ministry of National Education. In the research, the data were collected with the semi-structured interview form technique, which is one of the qualitative research methods. The data obtained in this study were analyzed descriptively according to the previously classified guidelines. When the results of this study are examined, it can be seen how the school situation affects the readiness of the student, the high internal motivation of the student, how the child's genetic and mental codes direct the child, the fact that the financial conditions are directly proportional to the education, what kind of environment he grows up in, the textbook is not sufficient for the exam. Whether there is an additional source or not, the direct reflection of friendship relations or the level of class success on the student, the burden of more responsibility than the student can bear, Results have been obtained such that its existing capacity should be supported socially and economically rather than being very intelligent.

Keywords: Social Studies, Turkish Education System.

Introduction

The value given to social sciences in developed societies is increasing day by day. It is a discipline that deals with the individual, social life and events from different perspectives with a scientific approach; It is important for a better understanding of the individual and social events. The experiences of social sciences should be transferred to new generations in order to raise healthy individuals who understand the individual and the social structure, can live together. The rapid increase in industrialization and urbanization towards the end of the twentieth century has caused human beings to face different social problems. Since people had to live together, they had to be more qualified. Therefore, it was discussed how to develop a qualified person who can cope with all these changes and problems. As a result of these discussions, the purpose of social studies, which is the task of transferring culture and gaining identity in most countries, and the objectives to be gained were determined. Most developed countries have increased the importance given to the social sciences course and supported projects related to this field. Later studies also included the social studies course; It has been accepted as a branch that raises individuals who are active, creative, and have problem-solving skills and adapt to social life. The biggest factor in making the students understand the qualifications and skills within the scope of social

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sciences is the teacher. It is necessary for the students to be directed in the desired way and the teachers working in this field should have the field knowledge and general culture professional skills. Social studies teachers should be able to plan teaching activities as well as knowing the goals of social sciences and social studies (Demirel, 2004).

This study is important in terms of its contribution to revealing the problems encountered in the constant change of the curriculum, the inadequacy of the course hours, the factors affecting the success of the students, the attitude of the parents towards the course, and the solution proposals to be brought to the problems such as content validity. While developing a training program, a training program is currently being implemented and researches made in solving the problems that arise here have been utilized.

In the research, the answer to the question "What are the current problems in social studies education from the perspective of social studies teachers?" was sought. In this study, which will be done with this study, the problems faced by social studies teachers in the social studies lesson and other factors related to the social studies lesson, the current problems and solutions below were tried to be determined in line with the opinions of the social studies teachers;

1. What are the factors affecting the success of the student?
2. Are you satisfied with the way the topics in the social studies textbooks are handled?
3. What do you think is the role of parent attitude in students' success?

Method

In the research, it was aimed to reveal the existing or past problems as they are, therefore, a widely used qualitative design based on consultation was used. Qualitative method offers the opportunity to evaluate the reactions of people in the face of events and the emotions they feel with a holistic point of view and multidimensionally (Baltacı, 2019, p.368). The case study design, one of the qualitative research approaches, was used in the research.

Study Group of the Research

This research was conducted with 50 social studies teachers working in primary schools located in the center and rural areas of Mardin province, district and village, which are affiliated to the Ministry of National Education in Mardin.

Data Collection Tool of the Research

In the study, data were collected with a semi-structured interview form. Interviews were conducted with a semi-structured interview form developed by the researcher. While preparing the semi-structured interview form, the opinions of 3 experts (two social studies education experts, Turkish education experts) were used.

Analysis of Data

The data obtained in this study were analyzed descriptively according to the previously classified guidelines. In the entire data analysis process, the researcher got rid of his previous feelings and thoughts towards social studies teachers and placed himself in parentheses. After reading the data obtained from 50 interviewees many times, coding was done. While coding, the concepts used by the teachers were handled in the form of live codes, and descriptive codes were created that can best express the situation in cases where it is not considered sufficient. The categories were reached from the coding, these categories were presented in tables and presented thematically.

Results and Discussion

Views on Factors Affecting Student Success

According to the data in Table 1 below, the opinions of the participants on the question of what are the factors affecting student achievement are given. It is seen that the participant views are united in 3 different themes: student-based, family-based and school-based.

Table 1. Opinions on the factors affecting student achievement

| <i>Student Based</i> | % |
|---|----|
| Student readiness affects student success | 18 |
| Student motivation affects student success | 12 |
| The genetic status of the student affects the success of the student. | 10 |
| The mental state of the student affects the student's success. | 6 |
| Awareness/consciousness of the student affects the success of the student. | 6 |
| The environmental conditions of the student affect the success. | 36 |
| The student's access to technological materials affects success. | 14 |
| The circle of friends of the student plays an effective role on the success of the student. | 12 |
| <i>Family Based</i> | |
| Family influences student success | 32 |
| Parental attention is effective on student success. | 26 |
| The importance given by the family to education affects the success of the student. | 26 |
| Home environment affects student success | 20 |
| The education level of the family affects the success of the student. | 18 |
| The cooperation of the family with the school staff is effective in the success of the student. | 10 |
| Parental pressure has an impact on student success. | 10 |
| Socio-economic conditions are effective on student success. | 18 |
| Student nutrition affects student success | 6 |
| Financial conditions affect student success. | 4 |
| Spiritual conditions affect student success | 4 |
| <i>School Based</i> | |
| School staff have an impact on student success. | 32 |
| The physical conditions of the school affect the success of the student. | 26 |
| Smart board is effective on student success | 20 |

According to the data in Table 1, the student's readiness affects the student's success 18%, the student's motivation affects the student's success 12%, the student's genetic condition affects the student's success 10%, the student's mental state affects the student's success 6%, the student's awareness/consciousness affects the student's success 6% , external factors 2%, the environmental conditions of the student affect the success 36%, the student's access to the materials affects the success 14%, the student's friend circle plays an effective role on the student's success 12%, the family affects the student's success 32%, parental interest affects the student's success It is effective 26%, the importance the family attaches to education and training is effective on the success of the student 26%, the home environment affects the success of the student 20%, the education level of the family affects the success of the student 18%, the cooperation of the family with the school staff is effective on the success of the student 10%, parental pressure is effective on the success of the student 10%, socio-additional Onomic conditions affect the success of the student 18%, the nutrition of the student affects the success of the student 6%, the financial conditions affect the success of the student 4%, the moral conditions affect the success of the student 4%, the school personnel affect the success of the student 32%, the physical conditions of the school affect the success of the student % 26, the smart board is effective on the success of the student 20%, the educational tools affect the success of the student 14%, the class size affects the success of the student 10%.

Under the theme of student-based factors, it was emphasized that the students' readiness affects the success of the student category and that the education received in primary school directly affects the later school levels. As an example of the opinions in this category, the opinions of teachers with 34t code are given below:

"..a student who receives a good education in primary school is better in terms of readiness and this affects his success because he gains certain responsibilities, but you see, for example, another sibling did not receive primary school education properly, for example, his success may be less. When you look at the factors, the factors are the same, but the education in primary school is different. Even if the student's success is affected, basic education can be effective in terms of readiness. The child opens his eyes to primary school, if the primary school teacher has given him

some basic things, he comes to us more prepared, like basic concepts such as responsibility, and when he comes more prepared, it is easier to ask for that student.

Opinions of Social Studies Teachers on Textbooks and Suggestions for Solutions

Table 2 shows the participants' views on the questions "Are you satisfied with the way the subjects in the social studies textbooks are handled?" and "What kind of solutions do you offer for the problems in the social studies textbooks?"

Table 2. Findings about the opinions of social studies teachers about textbooks and their solution suggestions

| | f |
|---|----|
| I am not satisfied with the textbooks | 82 |
| There should be a short and concise exam-oriented question in the form of a lecture note. | 28 |
| Textbooks need to be heavily simplified | 18 |
| Seventh grade topics are too many and abstract | 14 |
| I am satisfied with the textbooks | 10 |
| There should be more events | 10 |
| Textbooks are better than old years | 6 |
| Up-to-date information needs to be added | 6 |
| You need to inform teachers about constructivism in in-service training. | 4 |

When the data in Table 2 is examined, I am not satisfied with the textbooks 82%, there should be a short and concise exam question in the form of a lecture note 28%, the textbooks need to be simplified very intensively 18%, the seventh grade subjects are too many and abstract 14%, I am satisfied with the textbooks 10% , there should be more activities 10%, textbooks are better than the previous years, 6%, up-to-date information needs to be added 6%, you need to give information about constructivism to teachers in in-service training 4%, a bit mixed 4%. It has been emphasized that the social studies textbooks distributed within the body of the National Education wear out quickly. As an example of the opinions in this category, 36t-coded participant opinions are given below:

“There seems to be a problem with the book as well, because the books can be scattered a lot, the pages can break, there is such a problem. Coated papers are not used. I think there is a problem with that, after all, children are young and a book needs to be able to withstand them.”

Findings Regarding the Role of Parent Attitudes in Student Success

Table 3. Findings related to the role of parent attitude in student achievement

| | f |
|---|----|
| The attitude of parents is very important in student success. | 94 |
| Parent's priority is not the child | 2 |
| There are exam-oriented parents | 2 |
| I think they put too much responsibility | 2 |
| Creating educational awareness among parents | 50 |
| Socio-economic | 40 |
| Cooperation with the school | 38 |
| family visits | 24 |
| The parent is not interested | 26 |
| Parent illiterate | 12 |
| She wants to have her own child do what the parents couldn't do. | 10 |
| Do not print | 10 |
| student coaching | 2 |
| If the MoNE becomes autonomous, necessary conditions will be met. | 2 |

According to the data in Table 3, the attitude of the parents is very important in student success 94%, the priority of the parents is not the child 2%, there are exam-oriented parents 2%, I think they take too much responsibility 2%, raising educational awareness in parents 50%, socio-economic 40% , cooperation with the

school 38%, family visits 24%, parents irrelevant 26%, parents illiterate 12%, parents want their own child to do what they can't do 10%, no pressure 10%, student coaching 2%, if MoNE is autonomous 2% form was found. In Table 3, there are opinions about the role of parent attitude in student success. The opinions of the participants in the category that the attitude of parents is very important in student success are given below:

"I would say that the parents are at least as effective as the school and the teacher in student success. I think that this parent's attention, warning them about their child and school, and indoctrinating them will increase success."

Conclusion

When the research findings are examined, the effects of the school situation on the readiness of the student, the high internal motivation of the student, how the child directs the child genetically and mentally, the fact that the financial conditions are directly proportional to the education, what kind of environment he grew up in, the textbook is not sufficient for the exam, and whether it has an additional source. The lack of friendship, the direct reflection of friendship relations or the level of class success on the student, the way the family raises the student, how and to what extent the family cares for their child, the expectation of the family from education, the education level of the family, the level of communication of the family with the school, the burden of more responsibilities than the student can bear, the student is very intelligent The existing capacity should be supported socially and economically, the frequency and form of nutrition, the student's not working in any job outside the school, the competence of the teacher, the teacher's love for the lesson, the attitude of the school staff, the physical condition of the school. Two conditions, educational equipment, class size are seen as factors affecting the success of the student. Karatekin (2006) conducted a research on the effect of teaching direction and way finding methods in primary school 4th grade social studies course according to multiple intelligences theory on student success. The results show parallelism with the results that they resort to traditional teacher-centered narratives due to the lack of resources to apply, the lack of tools and materials, the lack of knowledge in the use of materials, and the unclear textbooks.

When the opinions of the teachers about the social studies textbooks are examined, the majority of the textbooks are not published in high quality (Doğan & Torun, 2018), there are spelling mistakes in the book, the wrong writing of the dates given causes confusion for the students, the sharp transitions between the subjects, the denseness of the subjects. and abstract (Akşit, 2011; Atbaşı, 2007; Karakuş et al. 2014), the subject order in the book is not done well (Polat, 2006), the time is less compared to the subject density in the book (Memişoğlu & Köylü, 2015, Çetin, 2007), There is a shortage of students, the readiness level of the student, poor knowledge and visual aspects (Akdağ, 2009; Akgül & Sezer, 2007; Hussain, 2012; Roberts, 2014), there is an inconsistency between the textbooks and the central exams, and therefore each student needs additional books (Çelik & Katılmış, 2010). In the study of Aykaç (2007), it was concluded that the social studies textbook was not sufficient and there was a problem in transferring the acquisitions. The majority of the teachers stated that they taught the lesson with the notes they prepared instead of the books, thus they prepared the student for the exam. They stated that the books should be simplified, more activities should be included, up-to-date information should be dense and teachers should be given in-service training on constructivist education. When the results of the studies conducted by Arslantaş (2006), Akdağ (2009) and Sever & Koçoğlu (2013) are examined, the results are in line with the conclusion that alternative ways are sought because the social studies textbooks are not suitable for the level of the student for whom the social studies textbooks are insufficient.

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This statement; derived from Merve SAĞLAM's master's thesis.

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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