

**Sosyal Bilgiler Öğretmenlerinin Alternatif Ölçme ve Değerlendirme Teknikleri Hakkındaki Görüşleri**

**Opinions of Social Studies Teachers About Alternative Assessment and Evaluation Techniques**

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**Özet**

Yapılan bu çalışma sosyal bilgiler öğretmenlerinin alternatif ölçme değerlendirme teknikleri hakkındaki görüşlerini ortaya koymak amacıyla yapılmıştır. Araştırma 2014-2015 eğitim öğretim yılı güz döneminde Hatay, Kilis ve Gaziantep illerinde görev yapan toplam 61 sosyal bilgiler öğretmeni üzerinde gerçekleştirilmiştir. Araştırmaya katılan sosyal bilgiler öğretmenlerinin alternatif ölçme değerlendirme teknikleri hakkındaki görüşlerinin alındığı bu çalışmada nitel araştırma yöntemi kullanılmış ve var olan durumun ortaya konmasından dolayı da durum çalışması tekniği kullanılmıştır. Çalışma sonunda elde edilen veriler doğrultusunda şu sonuçlara ulaşılmıştır: Sosyal bilgiler öğretmenlerinin daha çok geleneksel ölçme değerlendirme tekniklerini tercih ettikleri, alternatif ölçme değerlendirme teknikleri hakkında yeterli düzeyde bilgi sahibi olmadıkları, alternatif ölçme değerlendirme tekniklerinden kavram haritalarını kullandıkları tespit edilmiştir. Bunun yanında alternatif ölçme değerlendirme tekniklerinin uygulaması aşamasında öğretmenlerin zaman sıkıntısı yaşadıkları ve öğrenciyi her yönüyle değerlendirmede alternatif ölçme değerlendirme tekniklerinin olumlu etkiye sahip olduğuna ulaşılmıştır.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** Sosyal bilgiler öğretmenleri, ölçme değerlendirme, alternatif ölçme değerlendirme teknikleri.

**Abstract**

This study was conducted to reveal the opinions of social studies teachers about alternative assessment and evaluation techniques. The research was carried out on 61 social studies teachers working in the provinces of Hatay, Kilis and Gaziantep in the fall semester of 2014-2015 school year. In this study in which the opinions of

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social studies teachers participating in the research about alternative assessment and evaluation techniques were received, the method of qualitative research was used and since an existing situation is presented, case study technique was used. In accordance with the data obtained at the end of the study, the following results were reached: Social studies teachers mostly prefer the traditional assessment and evaluation techniques, they don't have sufficient knowledge about alternative assessment and evaluation techniques and they use the concept maps among the alternative assessment and evaluation techniques. Besides, it is understood that the teachers mostly have the problem shortage of time in the application stage of alternative assessment and evaluation techniques and that they generally see the most important benefit of alternative assessment and evaluation techniques as the ability to evaluate students in every aspect.

**Key Words:** Social studies teachers, assessment and evaluation, alternative assessment and evaluation techniques.

### **Introduction**

While the importance of knowledge is rising rapidly in the world, the concept and understanding of knowledge is rapidly changing. The concepts of democracy and management are differentiating, the technology is rapidly developing and in parallel with all these, difficulties of switching from the globalization and industrial society to an information society are being experienced. The globalization process that began to dominate with these rapid change and development is not only a determinant factor in the economic area, but it also began to be effective in social and cultural areas. These developments also initiated the formation process of information society. It is obvious that information society has effects that accelerate the economic growth, that enhance the presentation of social infrastructure services and that increase the cultural interaction. One of the most important requirements of information society is the investment that will be made in information. Therefore, the largest contribution to the development of developing countries will be the investment made on human resources (DTP, 2000) naturally meaning investment in education.

Education is a process that helps individuals to gain their social beliefs, standards and the way of their struggle with the life (Adanali, 2008). In raising the life-long learning individuals, it can be said that the basic elements that allow the educational programs put into prac-

tice to be carried out in a sequential manner is educational programs. In this context, the educational programs that are prepared by commissions need to be prepared in parallel with the requirements of the era. Especially while the curriculums are prepared, in addition to the fact that the teaching-learning process is performed with modern methods, how the outputs at the end of the process will be assessed and in accordance to what criteria they are evaluated should be given great importance. However, this is not a situation that can be easily solved. It can be though at first glance that the question "Have the expected behavior changes occurred?" can be answered easily. However, when the qualities of behavioral changes that is intended to be performed through education are considered, it can be understood that this question can't be answered easily (Özçelik, 1998). When the teaching-learning process is considered as a whole, a systematic assessment and evaluation is required in order to reveal to what extent the learning has occurred in full. The determination of whether the behaviors that the students are expected to gain are acquired or not and to what extent these behaviors are gained are possible through assessment. Evaluation that is an indispensable and integral part of education is based on the assessments performed at the beginning of the training process, during the process and at the end of the process depending on its purpose (Atılğan, 2007). With these assessment and evaluation techniques, it is aimed that the skills acquired at the end of learning are revealed not only with a single aspect but also in a concrete way with different aspects. When the alternative assessment and evaluation techniques are used, the teachers can see the learning process and the learning products that emerges at the end of learning in their students, students see these factor in themselves and the parents see these in their children and they all can observe whether the learning has occurred or not. Therefore, the alternative assessment and evaluation techniques have recently began to be given importance at all levels of education in Turkey (Baki, 2008).

In the curriculum implemented in turkey in 2004, the assumption that due to their individual differences each student can learn better using different learning styles in their different areas of intelligence was adopted. Along with the constructivist approach and reorganization of the curriculum, some differences in the teaching process occurred (MOE, 2001). These aforementioned differences can be seen in

the used assessment techniques and methods. This different situation remains incapable in the determination of the classic test (exam) methods such as multiple choice, short answer, true-false, matching, gap-filling that are today used in order to assess student behavior; and the high-level mental processes such as problem solving, reading comprehension, critical thinking, analytical thinking, empathy, making research, decision making, understanding the importance of social history, creativity (Kutlu, 2007).

The fact that information is no longer a product but a process has revealed new approaches in the assessment and evaluation as well as in method and technique in education. In the traditional methods, the evaluation of student achievement is generally dealt separately from the teaching process and in a way that give weight to product more; for this purpose, multiple choice and short answered tests, written and oral examinations are attached importance. These conventional methods generally occur at the end of the teaching process and within a certain time period (Kılıç, 2006). However, the assessments made with such assessment instruments are sometimes not effective in determining the desired behavior change (Çelikkaya, Karakuş and Demirbaş, 2010). For example, while some of the desired behaviors change in education can be directly observed (gestures, facial expressions, etc.), some of them have features that can't be observed directly (intelligence, etc.). For these reasons, in order to determine at what level the terminal behavior occurs, the result can only be demonstrated with the assessment prepared in accordance with its purpose (Özçelik, 1998; Turgut, 1990). Of course, there is the process of evaluating these assessments. Evaluating is a process of judgment and inference from these assessments (Sifoğlu, 2007; Tekin, 1984). Alternative assessment and evaluation techniques differ from the conventional assessment and evaluation techniques and they focus on the evaluation of the process rather than the product (Century, 2002; Gamor, 2001; Naziro, 2005; Zimbicki, 2007). Some alternative assessment and evaluation techniques that emerged as an alternative to the conventional assessment and evaluation techniques and that are frequently used in today's world of education have emerged.

These approaches are; alternative assessment, authentic assessment and performance assessment approaches. Although each of the three approaches differ from each other in terms of their contents,

these concepts can occasionally be used as synonyms of each other (Marzano, Mc Tighe and Pickering, 1993).

The concept of alternative assessment is used to describe the instruments other than the assessment instruments that are not used in the conventional assessments (Çepni, 2007).

In the authentic assessment, the students have education as if they are in their own living environment, and they try to perform all given authentic tasks within this environment. All the tasks given to the students are just like their real-life challenges. Because, authentic assessment includes important questions or valuable and attractive problems which the students will use the available information in a creative and effective way for their performances (Mueller, 2005). Authentic assessment is benefitted in order to establish a relationship between the knowledge learned in school and the real world events and to describe the studies aimed at performing implementations associated with this (Çepni, 2007).

The performance evaluation is the test techniques in which the students show their knowledge and experiences together (Szymanski Suan and Haas, 2005). The performance evaluation is determining the effectiveness of students using some assessments instruments whose validity and reliability were achieved after giving them a task in order to measure the knowledge, skill and attitudes of students in a desired area of learning (Çepni, 2007). The students, in performance evaluations, implement and perform instead of answering a simple choice. The students create or produce something in more than enough time for the process or the product or both of them. And the students even evaluate how they actively construct their answers for complex and significant problems or tasks (Elharrar, 2006).

Based on the new developments in the area of education, the curriculum that the Ministry of Education put into practice in primary schools in 2005-2006 school year was shaped according to the constructivist educational approach. 2005 Social Studies Lesson Curriculum formed in accordance with the constructivist approach to education would significantly contribute to the students to comprehend important approaches and to improve some historical skills such as perception of time and chronology, perception of change and continuity, using evidences and some geographical skills such as space perception, making observations as well as some general skills such as crea-

tive and critical thinking, problem solving, decision making, making research, entrepreneurship. The assessment and evaluation techniques used in Social Studies Course should try to measure the knowledge of the students on their past, on themselves and on their environment; and their progress in the approach and ability to use historical and geographical skills (Algan, 2008).

With the renewal of curriculums, the assessment phase is replaced by alternative assessment and evaluation techniques. It has been revealed that teachers are not sufficiently aware of this issue and therefore they can't use alternative techniques effectively and they need training in alternative assessment and evaluation (Aykaç, 2007; Candur, 2007; Carnevale, 2006; Erdemir, 2007; Gelbal and Kellecioğlu, 2007; Gömleksiz and Bulut, 2007; Nash, 1993; Pilten, 2001; Şenel, Er Nas and Çepni, 2008; Yapıcı and Demirdelen, 2007).

#### *The Purpose of the study*

This study was conducted to reveal the opinions of social studies teachers about alternative assessment and evaluation techniques.

### **Methodology**

#### *Research Design*

This study was conducted to reveal the opinions of social studies teachers about alternative assessment and evaluation techniques. The study has a qualitative dimension in this respect. Qualitative research is revealing the perceptions and features in a realistic and holistic way through data collection tools such as observation, interview and document analysis in their natural environment (Yıldırım and Şimşek, 2008). Generally speaking, qualitative researcher continues the process by explaining the concepts, meanings and relations based on observation, interview and documents (Merriam, 1998). Case study model was used in this study in which the opinions of social studies teachers about alternative assessment and evaluation techniques were determined. Because the aim in case study is to reveal the results about a certain situation, it is not possible to generalize the results into different situations (Yıldırım and Şimşek, 2008).

#### *Study Group*

The population of the study consists of 61 social studies teachers working in official and private primary schools within the body of MOE in the provinces of Hatay, Kilis and Gaziantep.

#### *Data Collection Tool*

Five open-ended questions were asked to social studies teachers in order to express their opinions about alternative assessment and evaluation techniques. Open-ended questions give the researcher the opportunity to deal with the case in a flexible and open-ended approach (Yıldırım and Şimşek, 2008). To ensure the questions asked to the teachers in order to obtain data are clear and understandable, firstly the prepared interview form was applied to 18 teacher candidate and the semi-structured interview form took its final form by taking expert opinions.

The following questions took place in the semi-structured interview form:

- ✓ Please explain whether you make use of alternative or conventional assessment and evaluation techniques more in your lessons.
- ✓ Please explain whether you are sufficiently aware of alternative assessment and evaluation techniques or not.
- ✓ Please explain which of the alternative assessment and evaluation techniques you prefer more.
- ✓ What are the problems you are facing in the implementation stage of alternative assessment and evaluation techniques?
- ✓ What are the most important benefits that the alternative assessment and evaluation techniques have provided you?

#### *Data Analysis*

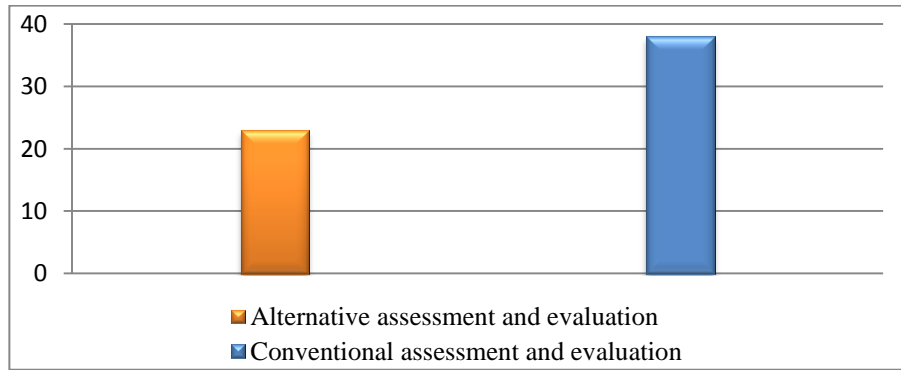
The data obtained from the open-ended questions in the semi-structured interview form were analyzed using content analysis. Content analysis is a scientific approach that allows verbal, written and other materials to be examined in an objective and systematic way (Tavşancıl and Aslan, 2001). It is intended to uncover the truth reserved in data definition and content through content analysis. In this context, the coding is done according to the responses of teacher in the first stage in the study. After the coding was done, the data were classified and gathered as common expressions. While the analysis was

being made, it was observed that some teachers gave more than one answer to the questions. Therefore, the classifications were made considering all the answers. Then, the data were organized and were presented through tables after being grouped.

### Results

In this part of the study, the findings about the opinions of social studies teacher about alternative assessment and evaluation techniques are given.

**Table 1.** The findings that belong to the general usage of alternative and conventional assessment and evaluation techniques



The answers given to the question "Which of the alternative assessment and evaluation techniques do you benefit more?" that is asked to the social studies teacher are shown in detail in Table 1. When the Table-1 is examined, while 23 of the social studies teachers express that they benefit from the "Alternative Assessment and Evaluation" techniques, 38 of them express that they benefit from "Conventional Assessment and Evaluation" techniques.

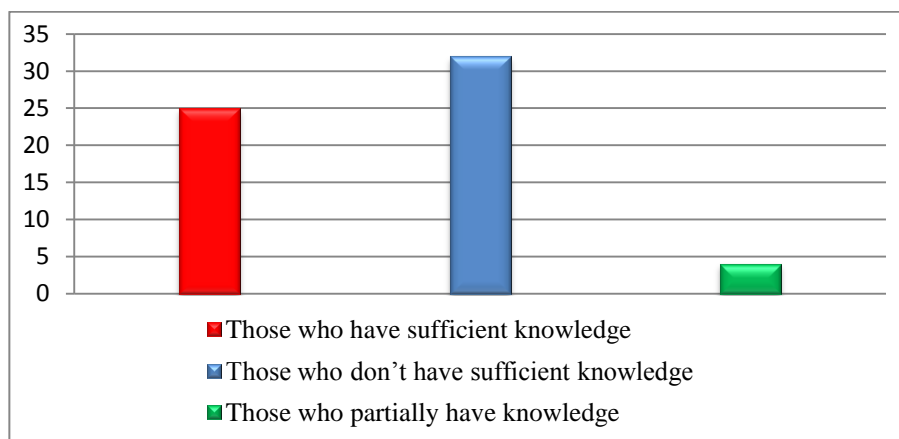
The appropriate opinion of teacher who says that he uses "Alternative Assessment and Evaluation" techniques is as follows: "Old stereotype assessment and evaluation techniques are not adequate any more. I have never thought that the application that indexes the success or failure of student to only an exam is correct. Now, I reap the benefit of the education I had at university about alternative assess-



*ment and evaluation techniques and thus I can assess the students in so many ways. (Teacher 8)*

The appropriate opinion of teacher who says that he uses "Conventional Assessment and Evaluation" techniques is as follows: "Previously, I used to benefit from the alternative assessment and evaluation techniques in my classes. But now, all my classes so crowded that I necessarily use the conventional assessment and evaluation techniques. And also, the conventional assessment and evaluation techniques don't take much of my time. Therefore, I am say that I benefit from the conventional assessment and evaluation techniques more." (Teacher 21)

**Table 2.** The findings that belong to the level of knowledge about alternative assessment and evaluation techniques

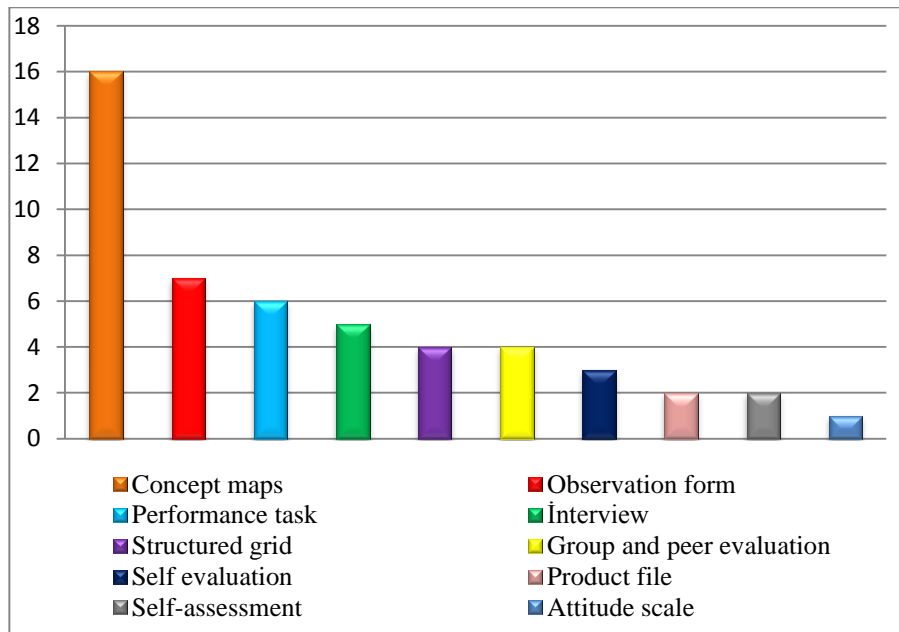


The answers given to the question "Please explain whether you are sufficiently aware of alternative assessment and evaluation techniques or not." that was asked to social studies teachers are shown in detail in Table-2. When Table-2 is examined, 25 of the social studies teacher stated *they were sufficiently aware*, 32 of them stated that *they were not sufficiently aware* and 4 of them stated that *they were partially aware* of the alternative assessment and evaluation techniques.

The appropriate opinion of teacher who stated that "I am now sufficiently aware" is as follows: "I only heard the names of alternative assessment and evaluation techniques while I was at university

and I hardly remember the names of many of those techniques. Though, if you want me to list them right now, I doubt if I can. Because, there are so many alternative assessment and evaluations techniques that I don't know which technique to use in which lesson. Now within the process of courses, the conventional assessment and evaluation techniques operate well enough. So, I don't see using the alternative assessment and evaluation techniques as necessary." (Teacher 60)

**Table 3.** The findings that belong to the usage of alternative assessment and evaluation techniques

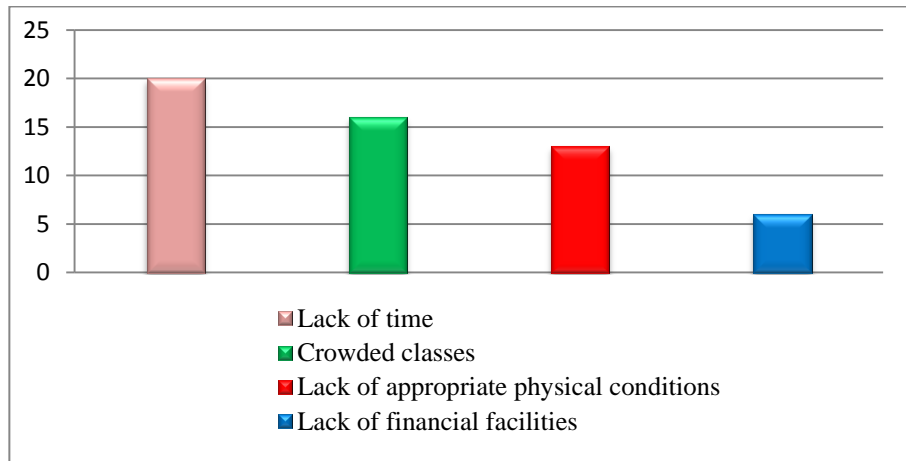


The answers given to the question "Please explain which of the alternative assessment and evaluation techniques you prefer more." that was asked to social studies teachers are shown in detail in Table-3. When Table-3 was examined, 16 of the social studies teachers stated that they use "Concept maps", 7 of them use "Observation form", 6 of them use "Performance task", 5 of them use "Interview", 4 of them use "Structured grid", another 4 of them use "Group and peer evalua-

tion", 3 of them use "Self evaluation", 2 of them use "Project file", and another 2 of them use "Self-assessment" and 1 of them use "Attitude scale".

The appropriate opinion of teacher who stated that he used "Concept maps" is as follows: "There are many abstract concepts that are difficult to teach such as human rights, democracy and rule of laws in the social studies lessons. I always make my students draw concept maps in order to teach these concepts clearly and to reveal the relations with other concepts. In this way, I can clearly see to what extent the abstract concepts in the units are learned and what kind of bond are established with other abstract concepts. In addition to this, the student needs to play an active role in the process of learning in the constructivist approach. And I make both my students and the process of learning more active by drawing concept maps and also I can ensure that they can discuss with themselves and with me by doing this. Because of this, I prefer concept maps more in my lessons when compared to other alternative assessment and evaluating techniques." (Teacher 37)

**Table 4.** The findings that belong to the problems faced at the implementation stage of alternative assessment and evaluation techniques

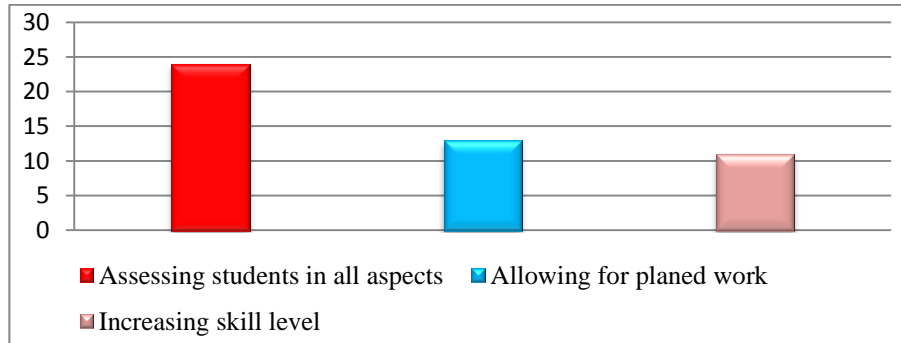


The answers given to the question "What are the problems you are facing in the implementation stage of alternative assessment and

evaluation techniques?" that was asked to social studies teachers are shown in detail in Table-4. When Table-4 was examined, 20 of the social studies teacher expressed "Lack of time", 16 of them expressed "Crowded classes", 13 of them expressed "Lack of appropriate physical conditions", 6 of them expressed "Lack of financial facilities" as the problems faced in the implementation process.

The appropriate opinion of teacher who stated the problem of "Lack of time" is as follows: "I do not have much difficulty in using the conventional assessment and evaluation techniques in the course process. In contrast, I do not have any time to use the alternative assessment and evaluation techniques within the course process. When I use, I can't finish my lesson or my other works go wrong. However, believe me; it takes a long time to prepare the alternative measurement instruments. That is to say, it can be a modern application but I want to express that the time of lessons is not sufficient both to prepare and to implement." (Teacher 11)

**Table 5.** The findings that belong to the benefits which the alternative assessment and evaluation techniques provide teachers



The answers given to the question "What are the most important benefits that the alternative assessment and evaluation techniques have provided you?" that was asked to social studies teachers are shown in detail in Table-5. When Table-5 was examined, 24 of the social studies teacher stated their opinions as "assessment of students in all aspects", 13 of them stated "allowing for planned work", 11 of them states "increasing skill level".

*The appropriate opinion of teacher who stated the opinion of "assessing student in every aspect" is as follows: The overall objective of the alternative assessment techniques is to introduce student with many aspects in detail. Hence, I can reveal what the student did or didn't do by using these techniques. Thus, the problems faced during the process of transferring the information to the students and the precautions to be taken against these problems can be seen more clearly." (Teacher 48)*

### **Conclusion**

It can be said that the knowledge, skills and attitudes that are necessary for the individuals against the existing and possible adverse events can be acquired through the social studies lesson. From this point of view, in order for the teachers who are the executives of education and training activities to assess the students in many different ways within the process of courses, they need to have enough level of knowledge about today's modern alternative assessment and evaluation techniques. Because, education is a complex process that occurs as a result of a combination of multivariate components such as objectives, content, teaching-learning situation and assessment and evaluation. The assessment and evaluation is maybe the most difficult and most important component in this complex process. Indeed, the Primary School Curriculum that was put into practice in 2005 in Turkey has indicated that the alternative assessment and evaluation techniques that center the assessment of students with all aspects need to be used (Kabapınar and Ataman, 2010). This study was conducted in order to reveal what the opinions of social studies teachers about the alternative assessment and evaluation techniques are. The data obtained as a result of the analysis are given in detail below.

In the study, it was concluded that the social studies teachers benefit from the conventional assessment and evaluation techniques more when compared to the alternative assessment and evaluation techniques. In the case that social studies teachers prefer the conventional assessment and evaluation techniques more when compared to the alternative assessment and evaluation techniques, their time, their habits, financial burdens and lack of sufficient knowledge about the techniques are considered to be effective. Many studies supporting

this conclusion can be found in the literature (Adanalı, 2008; Çakan, 2004; Çelikkaya et al., 2010; Gelbal and Kellecioğlu, 2007). In fact, in the study made by Çepni and Çoruhlu (2010), it was found that the teachers prefer the techniques that do not require much effort in the preparation phase. When the findings about the knowledge level of social studies teachers on the alternative assessment and evaluation techniques, it was concluded that the social studies teacher mostly do not sufficient level of knowledge about the alternative assessment and evaluation techniques. It is thought that the absence of courses on the alternative assessment and evaluation techniques in the universities in Turkey before 2005 naturally led to the fact that the teachers who graduated before 2005 do not have information about the alternative assessment and evaluation techniques. Indeed, almost half of the teachers participated in the study stated that they had sufficient knowledge about the alternative assessment and evaluation techniques. It is thought that these teachers probably graduated from university after 2005 and thus that they had sufficient level of knowledge because they had courses about the alternative assessment and evaluation techniques. Studies that support the obtained result can be found in the literature (Çalık, 2007; Çelikkaya et al., 2010; Gelbal and Kellecioğlu, 2007; Yayla, 2011). On the other hand, in the study conducted by Adanalı (2008), it was found that social studies teachers have sufficient level of knowledge about the alternative assessment and evaluation techniques. When the findings on which of the alternative assessment and evaluation techniques are preferred by social studies teachers more, it was found that social studies teachers especially use the concept maps. The fact that concept maps are more advantageous in terms of time and cost when compared to other alternative assessment and evaluation techniques are considered to be effective in social studies teacher preference to use them. The obtained result supports the result of the study conducted by Çelikkaya et al., (2010). When the findings about the problems that social studies teacher encounter in the implementation of the alternative assessment and evaluation technique, the social studies teachers stated that the classes are crowded; that the physical conditions of classes are not appropriate; that financial resources are not sufficient; and especially that there is not enough time to implement the alternative assessment and evaluation techniques. The teachers think that the fact that the level of knowledge

required in the preparation and implementation of the alternative assessment and evaluation instruments is at a good level influences the formation of this point of view. While many other studies that support the obtained result can be found in the literature (Adanalı, 2008; Anıl and Acar, 2008; Bal and Doğanay, 2010; Çelikkaya et al., 2010), studies which reveal that there are troubles caused by classroom size can also be found in the literature (Atasoy and Akdeniz, 2006; Gelbal and Kelecioğlu, 2007; Kabapınar and Ataman, 2010; Ünver, 2002). When the findings of the benefits which the alternative assessment and evaluation techniques provide to social studies teachers are examined, the teachers stated that they prefer alternative assessment and evaluation techniques because they give the opportunity to describe students in all aspects. The fact that teachers have sufficient knowledge about the content of alternative assessment and evaluation techniques is considered to be effective on the formation of this point of view of social studies teachers. Indeed, in the study Kabapınar and Ataman (2010), they reached the conclusion that the alternative assessment and evaluation techniques allow students to be assessed in all aspects.

#### *Suggestions*

In service training courses should be given importance as possible in order to ensure the philosophical background of the alternative assessment and evaluation techniques to be understood better by the teachers.

The reasons of why the alternative assessment and evaluation techniques are not preferred by teachers should be examined.

Effective solutions to the problems encountered in the implementation phase of alternative assessment and evaluation techniques should be produced.

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