

## What Should Be Taught in Social Studies Classes Depending on Families?

### Ailelere Göre Sosyal Bilgiler Dersinde Ne Öğretilmeli?\*

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#### ÖZ

Bu nitel araştırmada; ortaokul öğrencilerinin ebeveynlerinin sosyal bilgiler dersinde hangi konuların öğretilmesini istedikleri ve hangi konuları önemli buldukları belirlenmiştir. Sosyal Bilgiler Öğretim Programı'na ilişkin birçok çalışmanın yapıldığı fakat ebeveynlerin sosyal bilgiler dersinde öğretilmesini istedikleri konularla ilgili böyle bir nitel çalışmanın yapılmadığı tespit edilmiştir. Araştırmada nitel araştırma yönteminden yararlanılmış ve katılımcıların belirlenmesinde amaçlı örneklem türlerinden kritik durum örnekleme kullanılmıştır. Bu nedenle araştırma; alt, orta ve üst düzey ekonomik düzeydeki ortaokulların 5., 6. ve 7. sınıfta öğrenimine devam eden 14 öğrencinin ebeveynleri ile gerçekleştirilmiştir. Veri toplamak için yarı yapılandırılmış görüşme formu kullanılmıştır. Görüşmelerden elde edilen veriler tema, kategoriler ve kodlar şeklinde verilmiştir. Ayrıca ebeveynlerin görüşlerini ayrıntılı bir biçimde göstermek için doğrudan alıntılara da yer verilmiştir. Görüşme sonuçlarına göre; ebeveynlerin sosyal bilgiler dersinde öğretilmesini istedikleri konular sosyal bilgiler öğretim programında yer alan öğrenme alanlarına göre düzenlenmiştir. Ebeveynlerin en yüksek Birey ve Toplum", "Etkin Vatandaşlık" ve "en düşük ise "Küresel Bağlantılar" öğrenme alanlarındaki kazanımlara ilişkin görüş bildirdikleri tespit edilmiştir. Bununla birlikte "Kültür ve Miras" ve "İnsanlar Yerler ve Çevreler" öğrenme alanlarıyla ilgili olarak görüş bildirmedikleri görülmektedir. Ebeveynlerin Sosyal Bilgiler Dersi Öğretim Programında yer alan öğrenme alanları ve bu alanlara ilişkin kazanımlara ilişkin detaylı bilgilendirilmeye ihtiyaçları olduğu tespit edilmiştir.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** Sosyal bilgiler dersi, ebeveynler, nitel araştırma.

#### ABSTRACT

In this qualitative research; It was determined that which subjects the parents of secondary school students wanted to be taught in the social studies course and which subjects they found important. It has been determined that many studies have been conducted on the Social Studies Curriculum, but no such qualitative study has been conducted on the subjects that parents want to be taught in the social studies course. Qualitative research method was used in the research and critical case sampling, which is one of the purposeful sampling types, was used to determine the participants. A semi-structured interview form was used to collect data. The data obtained from the interviews were given in the form of themes, categories and codes. In addition, direct quotations are included to show the views of the parents in detail. According to the results of the meeting; The subjects that parents want to be taught in the social studies course are arranged according to the learning areas in the social studies curriculum. It is determined that the parents

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expressed their opinions on the achievements in the learning areas of "Active Citizenship" and "Individual and Society" the highest and "Global Connections" the lowest. However, it is seen that they do not express their opinions about the learning areas of "Culture and Heritage" and "People, Places and Environments". It has been determined that parents need detailed information about the learning areas in the Social Studies Curriculum and the acquisitions related to these areas.

**Keywords:** Social studies education, parents, qualitative research.

## INTRODUCTION

Family is the primary social environment where children gain core knowledge, skills, behaviors, and values and thus develop attitudes towards their surroundings. Children attain the fundamentals of the social studies content, attitudes, values, behaviors, and skills in the family. The family is the initial bond-establishing environment between the individuals and society the child lives in, and the child acquires socialization within the family. Individual skills such as the ability for self-expression, awareness of the societal issues in which they live, and the capacity for being socially beneficial begin to develop in the family in the early stages of life, and schools also contribute to the development of these skills.

The social studies classes, which draw their subjects from real-life experiences, contribute significantly to preparing individuals for life by equipping them with the knowledge, skills, values, and behaviors essential to be respectable and active citizens and aware of their social responsibilities. The social studies classes are also expected to educate individuals in line with conforming to societal expectations, being conscious of social norms and societal harmony, attributing great value to democracy, embracing Atatürk's Principles and Reforms, and comprehending the significance of the concepts of nation, society, homeland, and state. Social studies are a curriculum developed by compiling various academic disciplines, including history, geography, economy, politics, sociology, anthropology, law, and philosophy. Considering the Social Studies Curriculum, there are seven learning domains entitled 'Individual and Society,' 'Culture and Heritage,' 'People, Places, and Environments,' 'Science, Technology, and Society,' 'Production, Distribution and Consumption,' 'Active Citizenship,' and 'Global Connections' from the fourth to the seventh grade. The Social Studies Curriculum published by the Ministry of National Education (MEB, 2018) for the Primary and Secondary Schools aims to instruct citizens through the following education and training contexts: maintain a favorable attitude towards the values defining historical, cultural, and political past, present, and future of the Republic of Turkey; concordantly, educate students with the awareness of their language, history, culture, and homeland, sensitive/conscious to democracy and human rights, aware of their civic duties, responsibilities, and rights, possess knowledge, skills, and nobility, capable of making the right and logical decisions, and finding solutions to social problems (Ozturk & Baysal, 1999). Furthermore, according to Öztürk (2012), social studies are a curriculum that blends knowledge and techniques from the social and human sciences to raise active citizens capable of making knowledge-based decisions and solving problems under the changing national and global conditions.

The content analysis of the learning domains in the Social Studies Curriculum reveals that several approaches seem to have been adopted from the past to the present while teaching the topics covered in the social studies classes. The teaching of this curriculum uses three fundamental strategies. Among these, citizenship teaching refers to handing down the cultural core values and beliefs to the next generations. In this process, which is based on a teacher-centered education approach, the topics of history, geography, and civics are used in the implementation phase of the lessons (Tay, 2010). With cultural heritage education, it is possible for children to recognize and protect not only the local heritage but also the universal world heritage. In this sense, the course that will best provide education about cultural heritage and inform students is the Social Studies course (Özbaş, 2012). While transferring the cultural

heritage, however, the primary purpose of social studies as social sciences is to ensure students acquire knowledge and upskill in the disciplines of the social sciences. The idea behind this procedure—a student-centered education approach—is that gaining knowledge, skills, and values of the social sciences is the best way to active citizenship (Tay, 2010). In reflective thinking, students at the core of social studies are aimed to develop a capacity to define and analyze personal and societal problems and make the appropriate decisions in response to them (Barr et al., 1978). Given that these three strategies are included in social studies curricula, their shared goals appear to raise active and participative individuals capable of making decisions critically, establishing cause and effect relationships, displaying sensitivity to the problems they encounter, and seeking solutions for answers.

Students, teachers, and education program components—the core elements of the educational system—play significant roles in reintegrating active and participatory individuals into society. Each of these three components is in constant interaction with the other. In addition to their interactions, each element also has a crucial part in the education system. The teacher, who is the main actor of the teaching process, is the organizer and implementer of the learning environment with his attitude, behavior and approach. The teacher is responsible for organizing and executing the educational process (Wragg, 2002). However, education initially starts in the family. Hence, families' expectations and their views on the curricula are believed to be valuable in the educational system since they are the initial institution responsible for bringing up children who are in harmony with society and recognize what society expects from them before they begin school. Because individuals somehow comprehend the reflections of the rules, issues, and knowledge on how the system works in the family environment—the nucleus model of the society. Since social classes play such a critical role on students, it is necessary to consider the views of the families when deciding which subjects to teach their children. There have been numerous studies in the literature on the Social Studies Curriculum in Turkey. The detailed analysis of this literature revealed that while several studies approached qualitative and quantitative methods in a sampling population consisting of social studies classes students, teacher candidates, teachers, and Social Studies Curricula in Turkey, no such qualitative research was conducted with the parents of secondary school fifth, sixth, and seventh-grade (11-13 years old) students (Altıntaş, 2005; Baysal, 2020; Beldağ et al., 2017; Can, 2019; Kalaycı et al., 2004; Kaymakçı & Ata, 2012; Öztürk & Baysal, 1999; Öztürk & Kafadar, 2020; Öztürk & Ünal, 1999; Tay & Tay, 2006; Topçu & Katılmış, 2013; Topçu, 2017; Türe & Deveci, 2021; Utkugün, 2020; Uyar, 2020). Therefore, this research aimed to define what subjects the students' parents in this age interval would prefer to have included in the social studies classes. It is intended that the study findings will further contribute to identifying the level of parents' knowledge about the contents addressed in social studies curricula. Ultimately, this research will fill a gap and contribute substantially to the literature.

## **METHOD**

Qualitative research is a method in which interviews are conducted in order to reveal perceptions and events in a realistic and holistic way, the data is not digitized, and aims to describe, interpret and understand the participants' perspectives in depth (Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2016). For this reason, this research was conducted within the scope of qualitative research as it aimed to determine parents' thoughts on what should be taught in Social Studies course.

### **2.1. Study Group**

The research study group consisted of the parents of the students enrolled in the fifth, sixth, and seventh grades in Denizli province. While selecting the secondary schools representing each economic level to conduct the research, a list generated based on the schools' socio-economic statuses and prepared by the Denizli Provincial Directorate of National Education was used. The

parents of the students attending the fifth, sixth, and seventh grades in these selected schools were kindly invited to the study by announcing the purpose of the research in writing. As a result, 14 parents whose children were students in secondary schools with varying socio-economic statuses voluntarily participated in the study.

## 2.2. Data Collection

A semi-structured interview form was used to seek the opportunity of finding answers to specific questions and gathering additional information during the interview. The interview form, the petitions for Parent Participation, the Ethics Committee Approval issued by the University's Publication Ethics Committee, and the audio recordings and transcriptions of the interviews were all preserved on file for future reference in case of any ethical issues arose.

The semi-structured parental interviews were employed to collect the research data. The primary reason to prefer the semi-structured interview technique was to determine the topic recommendations of the parents in the social studies classes. However, there were other reasons to choose the semi-structured interview, including the ability to probe participants with more questions to fully understand their perspectives, allowing them to provide examples or elaborate on their responses, and conducting the interviews in a specific order (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007; Marshall & Rossman, 2006). During the interviews, a tape recorder recorded the parents' voices. The following question was posed to all parents in the interview: 'Which subjects do you think should be taught in the social studies classes?'

## 2.3. Data Analysis

The study data were analyzed through content analysis. In this context, the data acquired from the interviews as audio recordings were initially examined, transcribed in Microsoft Word Software, and coded. Following the coding stage, categories and themes were established using links between the codes. Finally, the data were classified based on codes and categories. The learning domains in the 2018 Social Studies Curriculum were considered while setting these categories.

This study also provided direct quotations from the participants to more accurately depict their opinions and serve the reader to understand the details of their experiences. Codes were utilized for the participants in the analytic procedure instead of their real identities to maintain their confidentiality. Table 1 provides detailed information on the code names and demographics of the parents quoted their opinions.

**Table 1**

*Personal Details of Parents Whose Opinions were Directly Quoted*

Code Name	Child's Grade	Age	Educational Level	Occupation
Canan	5 <sup>th</sup> grade	45	High School	Cashier
Sevgim	7 <sup>th</sup> grade	43	University	Lawyer
Ahmet	5 <sup>th</sup> grade	42	University	Police
Halil	6 <sup>th</sup> grade	51	Secondary School	Worker
Nilgün	5 <sup>th</sup> grade	43	High School	Housewife
Murat	7 <sup>th</sup> grade	44	University	Teacher
Veli	7 <sup>th</sup> grade	41	Secondary School	Tradesman
Nalan	7 <sup>th</sup> grade	39	High School	Housewife
Yağmur	5 <sup>th</sup> grade	46	University	Doctor
Ali	6 <sup>th</sup> grade	44	High School	Electrician
Şadiye	6 <sup>th</sup> grade	49	Doctorate	Academician
Gökhan	5 <sup>th</sup> grade	39	High School	Fireman
Tevfik	6 <sup>th</sup> grade	46	University	Officer
Yurdanur	6 <sup>th</sup> grade	46	University	Dentist

The children of the interviewed participants were students in Denizli provincial secondary schools with low, middle, and high socioeconomic and cultural structures. Analysis of parents' educational statuses revealed that they were at least secondary school graduates. Remarkably, none of the parents were illiterate or primary school graduates. Most parents were over 40 years of age, although their ages ranged from 39 to 51. The majority of the parents were high school (n=5) and university graduates (n=6), while the number of parents with only a secondary school (n=2) and doctorate level (n=1) education was relatively low. According to the demographic information in Table 1, it appeared that parents' occupations participating in the study differed significantly.

## FINDINGS

In line with the findings acquired from the views of the parents, the subjects that participants aspired to be discussed in the social studies classes were grouped under the following five categories by associating them with learning domains: 'Individual and Society,' 'Science, Technology and Society,' 'Production, Distribution and Consumption,' 'Active Citizenship,' and 'Global Connections.' The information in the table below (Table 2) was generated by multiple opinions (more than one) of each parent. Furthermore, parent views supported the categories established in the table.

**Table 2**

*Subjects That Parents Aspire to Be Discussed in Social Studies Classes*

Theme	Category	Code	
Subjects to be Taught in Social Studies Classes	Individual and Society	• Rights of the Child	
		• Respect for Diversity	
		• Multiculturalism	
		• Social Rules	
		• Unity of Family	
		• Duties and Responsibilities	
		• Patriotism (Love of nation and national flag)	
		Science, Technology, and Society	• Secure Internet Access
			• Impact of Technology on Society
			• Info Pollution
	• E-Government Knowledge		
	• Effects of Global Warming		
	Production, Distribution, and Consumption	• Conscious Consumer	
		• Significance of Production	
		• Consumer Society	
		• Collaboration with NGOs	
		Active Citizenship	• Human Rights
	• The Significance of Atatürk's Principles and Reforms		
	• The Vitality of the Democracy		
	• The Meaning and Significance of the Constitution		
• State Governance			
• Civism			
• Femicide-Pedicide			
Global Connections	• Social Issues and Solutions		
	• The Significance of Justice		
	• Emigration		

According to Table 2 summarizing the codes in the learning domains (categories), parents expressed their views the most on 'Active Citizenship' (7 codes) and 'Individual and Society' (7 codes), while they presented the least on 'Global Connections' (3 codes) domains. However, they delivered no opinion on 'Culture and Heritage' and 'People, Places and Environments.' Considering the codes generated by views in the learning domains, parents seemed to care about raising their children as good and participative citizens and listed the following features as their expectations from the social sciences classes for their children: being sensitive to their surroundings and social structure, being aware of the issues posing difficulties in the society regionally and globally, being capable of contributing to the solution of these problems, having core knowledge about the institutions and societal organizations, being conscious about the human rights and rights of the child, and comprehending the significance and indispensability of justice and democracy within the context of the Atatürk's Principles and Reforms.

### 3.1. Individual and Society

Analysis of the codes under the 'Individual and Society' learning domain, where the subjects that parents aspired to be taught in the social studies classes, revealed remarkably more inferences about society. Mr. Halil articulated his opinions as follows to emphasize the fact that the Turkish nation did not originate from a single identity and culture and the variations among individuals:

*"Our society is comprised of a variety of people, including Turk, Alevi, Laz, and Kurd. Afghans, Syrians, and Iranians have also recently emigrated to our country. Nonetheless, our society contains even more diverse people. I want my child to realize the existence of such people, not to upset them while criticizing, and learn lessons like respecting those who hold different opinions in social studies classes. We discuss how to tolerate these people at home, but I would want the social studies teacher to explain it too."*

Mrs. Yağmur stated the following remarks on the subject, emphasizing that the Rights of the Child were underestimated in our country and that many occasions were taking place in our society violating child rights, and highlighting that she did not know the rights of the child; moreover, adults had poor attempts to protect the rights of the child:

*"Children are the grown-ups of tomorrow. The more effectively raised they are as kids, the more equipped and self-confident adults they become. Children may express themselves more easily if they are aware of their rights. I believe raising children as aware of their rights is essential for public welfare. Therefore, social studies classes in every grade should include the Child Rights subject to inform the children properly."*

Mr. Veli, who is underlined raising socially beneficial individuals, expressed the following words:

*"In the social studies classes, I want the significance and indispensability of the terms such as homeland, the flag, the National Anthem, the country, and the nation to be taught extensively. Additionally, I favor educating children more about the rules of society and duties and responsibilities of individuals since we live together."*

Emphasizing the significance of family life, Mrs. Nilgün expressed her thoughts as follows:

*"Having an intact and happy family means lesser problematic individuals in society. The family environment in which people are raised largely influences their behavior. Children are more likely to grow up happy when their parents treat one another with love and respect. In my opinion, the social studies class should discuss the value of family and society. Emphasis should be given to family unity. Issues like duties and responsibilities of each member in the family should also be taught to children."*

Analysis of families' remarks indicated that they commonly refer to the significance of being 'us' in the way of being 'me.' Families also appeared to strive for their children to gain a

personal and social perspective on the society they live in, and they also have similar expectations from the social studies classes.

### 3.2. Science, Technology and Society

Assessment of the codes under this learning domain displayed that parents made inferences about the issues they experienced with their children, mainly related to the use of technology. Addressing how to access the internet and the negative impacts of spending excessive time on the internet, Mrs. Sevgim remarked the following statements:

*“Children browse different social media accounts, watch several videos and play games excessively. I think they spend too much time on the internet. At home, we discuss the harms of spending too much and poor-quality time on the internet; however, children tend to pay more attention to their teachers. Internet addiction causes attention deficit disorder. To me, children fail to focus on reading. Also, the internet is not something limited to games and videos. Children should be taught how to use the internet safely.”*

Expressing her displeasure that social media accounts limit inter-family communication, Mrs. Nilgün stated the following words:

*“Everyone in the family gathers in the evening. We made the mistake of buying a tablet for our daughter. Our daughter is immersed in her notepad and is not interested in chatting with us. As you put it, a family spends time together in the evenings talking about their days and watching movies or doing something like that. Our daughter got angry with us and began to spend time in his room if we took the iPad away from her. It would make me very happy if awareness is raised in the social studies classes about the usage of tablets and phones hindering inter-family communication and should be used less.”*

Stating that many governmental organizations had accounts on the internet and that accessing ways to those accounts should be provided to children in the social studies classes, Mrs. Sadiye verbalized her thoughts as follows:

*“Nowadays, most transactions take place online. While explaining the responsibilities of government agencies, I would like my children to learn about the idea of e-government, and I would let them know in what circumstances it will be helpful for them.”*

Complaining about the negative influence of the media on children, Mr. Gökhan remarked the following statement:

*“Nowadays, youth struggle greatly with believing in everything they read or see on social media. They aspire to resemble and act like the celebrities they follow on social media. There are some applications that all children use and affect each other negatively. In this context, I want the social studies classes to discuss the significance of social media, how to use it safely, and the consequences if misused. Youngsters should indeed be conscious of this issue in particular.”*

While discussing the significance of accessing accurate information on the internet, Mrs. Canan verbalized her expectations from the social studies classes as follows:

*“There are all kinds of news on the internet. My child is just in fifth grade and presumes everything on the internet is true. I want my child to be taught about this info-pollution on the internet, how to access accurate data, and not to believe everything. I think our children should be conscious about how and why they should use the internet. In addition, I would want them to learn how to contact institutions over the internet, where to send their complaints, and how to e-mail institutions online.”*

Stating that technological advancements also changed social structures, Mr. Gökhan expressed his thoughts as follows:

*“In the past, we seemed more attached to our manners and customs. Now we want to go for a night out with my kids. But they ask what are we going to do there? During the holidays, they do not wish to pay the elders for one-by-one visits. They call such activities as old habits. Technology, in my*

*opinion, hinders communication. People become talking less to each other at all. They use phones and tablets more in their hands. In social studies classes, I want my child to learn how technology negatively affects the social structure and how technology may be beneficial and contributive. I also like my child to raise awareness on this issue.”*

Parents strive for their children to acquire digital citizenship skills, which are becoming gradually critical nowadays. In essence, parents expect their children to develop the skills necessary to assert their civil rights using the technological tools available in today's digital world. However, parents also wish their children to use the internet and social media accounts more deliberately and productively. They anticipate social studies classes to teach their children how to be aware of all these issues.

### **3.3. Production, Distribution and Consumption**

Analysis of the codes under this learning domain conferred that parents sought the social studies classes to cover the consequences of changing climatic conditions on people's lives along with production and consumption issues. Mr. Murat made the following statement in an effort to demonstrate the significance of production for society:

*“Nowadays, societies are consumption-driven blindly and carelessly. We use water unconsciously. I sought my children to be taught how to become conscious consumers and use the national resources properly and the impracticability of consumption without production.”*

Mr. Tevfik, who sought his children to be conscious consumers, remarked the following words:

*“When we go to the grocery store with the children, they want to buy whatever flashes into their mind. Or, let us assume they need clothes, but they force us to purchase shoes they like even though they already have shoes. Even if we insist that they can only purchase what they need, they are unable or unwilling to comprehend us. I want the social studies classes to cover subjects on how to be a conscientious customer and what consumer rights are. I would also like such classes to discuss the duties and necessity of the Consumer Protection Association. It seems students pay more attention to such issues when teachers lecture them.”*

The following were the sentences Mrs. Sadiye touched upon about discussing the significance of Non-Governmental Organizations in the social studies classes:

*“While teaching children how to conserve soil, trees, and environment and sustain the current production, we also need to enlighten them about the Non-Governmental Organizations such as the TEMA Foundation working on this issue. Yet, children may visit TEMA, and an officer may lecture them on the significance of the environment and soil. In addition, children may become members of TEMA. I think it is very critical to provide information about such establishments and associations. In addition to attaining personal gains, children would know and experience what to do in cooperation with others.”*

Mentioning the changing climatic conditions, Mrs. Nalan verbalized the following statement:

*“Everyone is aware of global warming now. The current climate is not the same as it used to be. Our land is not what it used to be. Floods and storms have affected the places we reside. My family members are farmers. They complain about failing to harvest the same yield they used to get. The surroundings we live in and the food we nourish are crucial. I would seek social studies classes to discuss the excessive number of factories, the damage we cause to the environment, bad weather conditions, and the reasons causing such problems. I would also like our children to be more conscious of these subjects. The worth of the TEMA Foundation might also be taught to our children.”*

Mrs. Yurdanur, who sought her child to raise as a sensitive person to the environment, expressed her feelings as follows:



*“I would like my child not to throw rubbish around and warn others. I would very much like my child to be someone who understands his/her responsibilities towards the environment and respect the environment. I would want the social studies teachers to give messages about the environment in the classroom occasionally or to involve the children in cleaning up the garden so that our children ensure the development of an environmentally-sensitive personality. They could also take children to organizations such as TEMA or invite someone from such institutions and organizations to the class and give them a speech to our children. I think it will be more successful if the family at home and the teachers at school talk in this way.”*

It seemed that parents expected their children to be more aware of the difficulties keeping society occupied, particularly the environmental challenges, and come up with solutions to these problems in the social studies classes. Parents were predominantly more conscious about the issues of the surroundings they resided in, intending to resolve the social matters. Parents also touched upon the aspects that would be in Turkey’s best interests, such as serving the country, being sensitive to problems, having environmental awareness, unity and solidarity, and cooperation and progress. As a result, they were proven to have expectations from the social studies classes on being sensitive to these aspects. Furthermore, parents voiced their opinions about the contributions of NGOs to society rather than NGOs contributions to the individual; however, they demanded their children to be conscious of NGOs.

### **3.4. Active Citizenship**

The detailed assessment of the codes listed under this learning domain revealed that parents seemed to desire to raise their children as active and conscious individuals having minimal political knowledge and appreciating the value of democracy and human rights. However, parents also sought their children’s awareness of critical societal issues in their surroundings. Referring to mutual respect amongst people and the idea that peace can only exist in a community in this way, Mr. Ahmet quoted the following views on this subject:

*“My occupation (policeman) allows me to witness that people are not respectful to the rights of others, and thus there are so many fights in society. As a requirement of democracy, everyone has the right to express themselves, yet no one has the right to silence or restrict their freedom of speech for no reason. We should raise the consciousness of our children regarding human rights, the indispensability of democracy, and our constitutional rights.”*

Mrs. Sevgim also requested the subjects that Mr. Ahmet highlighted for teaching in the social studies classes and remarked the followings:

*“I would like the social sciences classes to teach the following topics: Why democracy is necessary for societies, what could happen if there is no democracy in the society, what the rights of a human being are, giving reference to specific constitutional provisions, the way to protect these rights by the constitution, and especially the significance and necessity of Atatürk’s Principles and Reforms. I think all these issues are indispensable elements of society.”*

However, Mr. Halil detailed the topics that social studies classes should cover based on the events he experienced:

*“I am a worker in a factory. We work too much but do not get enough salary. Sometimes our salaries are delayed. We, as workers, demonstrated in front of the factory to voice our concerns. But the factory owners did not care about us, they called the police, and a fight broke out. Some of our friends were taken to the police station. A person has the right to voice their opinions without harming others. Respect for human rights is necessary. I want my children to be taught about their rights and how to uphold them. Children should become conscious so that they are not unfair to the rights of others. I also want them to know that it is not a bad thing to strike to express their problems. I mentioned my experiences to my family. I talked to my children. But if their teachers talk about it in the class, this topic will gain more traction.”*

Expressing her thoughts on femicide and pedicide, a serious issue in our society, Mrs. Yurdanur quoted the following words:

*“As we all know, femicide and pedicide are increasing in our country constantly, but there are no penalties for it. In the social studies class, I would like teachers to instruct about femicide and pedicide within the context of the current events in our society. I also urge these classes to mention the value of children and women in society, explain the role and responsibilities of women in society, and talk about the criticalness of being respectful to women. Our boys and girls alike should comprehend how crucial this issue is.”*

Demanding that children should be taught core political knowledge in social studies classes; Mr. Ali stated his opinions with the following words:

*“I would like our children to be taught the definitions of words such as state, government, constitution, political party, and law in classes. How a state is governed from a village to a city should also be addressed. Furthermore, these classes should cover topics such as how our children become good citizens for our country and nation.”*

Evaluations of parents' opinions proved that they demand their children to become aware of the recent issues that do not fall off the agenda in Turkey, not to be indifferent to those issues, and be conscious of the indispensability and essentiality of democracy. Parents also seemed to have citizenship consciousness and intend to raise their children as sensible citizens.

### **3.5. Global Connections**

Emphasizing the momentous issues globally, parents touched upon the crucial concerns affecting our nation while highlighting the effects of the problems originating from other countries but somehow impacting our nation as well. Analysis of the codes derived from the parents' perceptions indicated a connection to the global agenda, and as a result, they mainly demanded that their children participate in and actively pursue this agenda. Referring to the significance of justice in a society, Mr. Veli verbalized the following opinions:

*“I would request mentioning the significance of justice in income distribution, law, and education. I would also like to emphasize the criticalness of justice in terms of genders. I have a daughter and a son. I try to be just for both of my children, and I take every chance to explain my actions to them. Without justice, society cannot be peaceful. People become unhappy. First and foremost, we must instill in our children to be fair, and make them comprehend that problems will never end without justice.”*

Drawing attention to the unrest in society, Mrs. Yağmur expressed her opinions on the subject as follows:

*“There are complaints about education, rights, national revenue, and production-consumption balance in our society. In addition, we have social issues such as violence against women, problems caused by gender inequity, intense resentment, rising unemployment rate, and the unemployment of university graduates. I want our children to know about these issues, recognize them and such similar matters, and make inferences on their own. The social studies classes may cover these issues. Our children can also express their thoughts. I think our children should be aware of these problems so that they do not become strangers to the society they live in.”*

Highlighting the adaptation issues to society arising from excessive immigration to our country, Mrs. Canan said the followings:

*“Many immigrants come to our country from Syria, Iran, and Afghanistan. Of course, it is difficult for them to adapt to our country. In essence, it is a challenging process for both of us. I believe that immigrant children do not interact with the kids in our nation. Such a situation is burdensome for children. There are immigrant children from these countries in almost every classroom. I believe that children can be more empathetic and open to accepting one another quickly if the positive and negative aspects of this immigration issue are presented from both sides. My daughter told me that*

*a Syrian child who attended her classes was excluded, and no one played the game with her. Well, he is just a child. Troubles in countries should not make children unhappy. I spoke with my daughter; I think that if this subject is discussed in classes, the children will become more sympathetic to each other. I believe the most suitable class to teach such topics is social studies.”*

Addressing gender equity, Mrs. Şadiye stated the following:

*“I want the social studies classes to mention that everyone is equal, regardless of gender. I want my child to know that women are entitled to the same rights and freedoms as men. I wish these classes to cover the femicide issues and the reasons behind them. Although I discuss these topics with my son and daughter at home, they will better comprehend how crucial these issues are for society if these classes lecture it.”*

The overall assessment of parents' opinions participating in the study revealed that parents sought their children to comprehend the society they live in, raise them as conscious and fine citizens with the literacy of media, economy, politics, and environment, and be aware of the pressing issues facing Turkish society these days. Additionally, parents are of the opinion that it will be beneficial for their children to be conscious of the reasons for the rising femicide in Turkish society so that they become individuals who recognize the value of gender equality. They believe that social studies classes may cover all of these disciplines. One of the parents also emphasized that people of various nationalities who immigrated to Turkey voiced their struggles in adapting to our society; as a result, he asked that the topics of refugees be addressed in the social studies classes. She also drew attention to the perceptions of immigrants, which have recently emerged as one of the most critical issues in our society.

## **DISCUSSION, RESULTS AND SUGGESTIONS**

This study ascertained which topics families sought to be taught in the social studies classes. For each parent, the social studies classes appeared to signify different meanings. Hence, the parents who exposed their opinions in the study indicated their expectations from the social studies classes in light of their children's features and their own world-views.

Parents appeared to have views and experiences on some topics taught in the social studies classes. They also seemed to be aware that social studies are life itself, and these classes prepare students for life; therefore, their expectations for social sciences were in this direction. The topics parents sought their children to learn were identified as core knowledge, skills, and behaviors related to various social issues such as literacy of the media, economy, and politics. Parents considered such literacies on topics mentioned above indispensable for their children's education. However, parents also insisted that their children receive an education on the value of family unity, comprehend the society they reside in, and be aware of social matters. According to Altun (2010), the theme in the social studies curriculum entitled "Currentness and Global Issues" received the most reference in the literature. He also inferred that with this theme, students would possibly address advancements and issues at national and global levels according to their grade level in the classroom. Parents appeared to prioritize the societal dimension of the social studies classes and have expectations about this dimension. Haas & Laughlin's (2000) research finding that teachers use current events to help students gain different perspectives, and Bennett's (1999) research finding that current events are used by students to solve real-life problems and search for resources supports the finding of this research. Doğan and Baloğlu Uğurlu (2017) reported that social studies teachers and preservice teachers who participated in their study indicated that social studies classes are critical since it enables students to be aware of current events. According to Akdağ et al. (2014), social studies classes supported by recent events enabled individuals to comprehend events from a variety of perspectives and assist them in developing a critical mindset. Malinowski (2012) stated that including current events in the Social Studies course contributes to students' critical thinking.

Analysis of the topics, which parents demanded their children to learn, revealed that they predominantly focused on 'Individual and Society' and 'Active Citizenship' learning domains and concentrated the least on 'Science, Technology, and Society' and 'Global Connections.' However, parents did express no opinion on the subjects centered around 'Culture and Heritage' and 'People, Places, and Environments' learning domains. The most critical topics that parents demanded their children to learn in classes were about the individual, the society they live in, and core knowledge about political science. It was among the priorities for parents that their children master some emotional and behavioral dimensions of political literacy. Some parents also preferred their children to be equipped with a rudimentary understanding of politics to make logical inferences when confronted by political matters in real life. Harwood (1992) reported that students who were comfortable debating political issues in social studies classes would have a higher consciousness level so that they would grow up as individuals freely expressing their opinions on the subject under discussion.

Parents did express no opinion on political parties, involvement, freedom, decision-making, and election-related elements. However, parents voicing their opinions about fundamental political knowledge and political literacy, which they demanded their children to learn, proved that their comprehension extended far beyond the traditional norm. Most of the students who participated in Sylvester's (2014) study stated that they were interested in current political issues and wanted to talk about politics. Parents also emphasized the significance of media literacy, including the proper and conscious use of the internet, being cautious in using social media tools, approaching the data on the internet with suspicion, and confirming its accuracy, in addition to topics such as being a conscious consumer, the benefits of production, and being an absolute consumeristic falling under economic literacy. Akhan (2010) reported that parents mostly desired to improve their children's literacy in economics for fulfilling their social responsibilities despite having no formal education in this era. Lailiyah et al. (2018) found that students discussing politics and current social issues with their family members had a more favorable perspective on politics. Experts and teachers participating in the study of Yıldırım and Öztürk (2017) also concurred that secondary school was the second-best level for implementing education in economics. The social studies teacher candidates who participated in Aksoy (2021) indicated that students should take media literacy teachings from the fourth or fifth grade of secondary school. Gedik et al. (2015) defined social studies as the best suitable class for media literacy education. The fact that parents cited the social studies classes for raising their children's awareness of political literacy, improving their skills in economic and media literacy, and making critical assessments on the current agenda suggested that they were already familiar with the content of the social sciences classes.

Parents' perceptions of NGOs in the 'Production, Consumption and Distribution' category revealed that they consider NGOs contribute to children developing a sense of responsibility, the ability to perceive diverse views, problem-solving skills, the capacity to empathize, and sensitivity to issues. However, parents appeared to insist that their children care about contributing to the society they live in and being attentive to societal matters. Eryılmaz et al. (2018), reported that teachers and students perceived NGOs as an opportunity for social cooperation. Guo et al. (2015) also noted that learning through serving society positively impacted students' acquisition of problem-solving skills.

A parent particularly mentioning the issue of rising immigration to Turkey from other nations and the arising challenges by such immigration in Turkish society highlighted a serious concern on the current agenda of Turkey recently. Stating that classmates of her child posed negative attitudes towards Syrian children in the class, she mainly drew attention to the perceptions of refugees, a recent and topical subject in our society. She claimed that Syrians who were in the process of adapting to our nation were marginalized and, in this regard, articulated the detrimental effects of communication failure among Turkish and Syrian children. The Istanbul Bilgi University Child Studies Unit's report (2015) also highlighted that communication between

children of Syrian refugees and Turkish citizens remained limited. Demir and Özgül (2019) noted that Turkish children displayed poor attitudes such as humiliation and rejection toward the Syrian children living in Turkey and that Syrian children were significantly distressed by the marginalization and discrimination behaviors. As a result, a sizable portion of Syrian children stated being highly dissatisfied with their lives in Turkey and planning to return to their home country. According to the research of Aydın and Kaya (2019), Syrian students indicated depression and trauma due to war and migration; therefore, they needed psychological care.

The findings acquired from the interviews inferred that almost all parents opined that the social studies curriculum played a critical role in forming their children into conscious citizens, preparing them for life, making them sensitive to societal issues, and giving them core knowledge and literacy required to understand some social matters. However, the assessment of all views of the parents together revealed that parents want to raise their children as good citizens, be respectful of human and children's rights, comprehend the indispensability of democracy, adopt Atatürk's Principles and Reforms, use technology responsibly, have a basic understanding of politics and the ability to think critically, be sensitive to national and global issues, and aware of the matter in the society they live. Tarhan and Gedik (2015) defined teachers as professionals who should know the rights of good citizenship, be aware of social fact-events, be familiar with national problems and seek solutions to them and have knowledge about some core political concepts. They further added that although parents discuss such topics with their children at home, they also prefer that children should learn them in social studies classes so that they corroborate and internalize them. Parents seem to consider social studies classes essential for their children's preparation for social life. Türe and Deveci (2021) stated that the incorporation of social studies with family-based activities would contribute to improving the effectiveness of the social studies curriculum.

Students need to implement what they learn in social studies classes in their daily lives to make these themes permanent. It is safe to say that conducting social studies classes with family-supported activities will improve the permanence while teaching these subjects in social studies. Therefore, 'Educational Activities Relating to Family Participation' might be planned for parents in the social studies classes.

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## GENİŞLETİLMİŞ ÖZET

### Giriş

Konularını hayatın içinden alan sosyal bilgiler dersinin; bireyleri hayata hazırlarken toplumsal sorumluluklarının bilincinde olan iyi ve aktif bir vatandaş olmaları için gerekli bilgi, becerileri, değer ve davranışları kazandırmada büyük bir katkısı bulunmaktadır. Sosyal bilgiler dersinden; toplumun beklentilerine uygun, toplumsal kuralların bilincinde olan ve toplumla uyumlu, demokrasinin önemine inanmış, Atatürk İlke ve İnkılaplarını benimsemiş, ulus-millet-vatan-devlet kavramlarının önemini farkında olan bireylerin yetiştirilmesi beklenmektedir. Eğitim sisteminin temel öğelerinin öğrenci, öğretmen ve eğitim programı olduğu bilinmektedir. Bu üç öge sürekli birbiriyle etkileşim halinde bulunmaktadır. Bu öğeler birbiri ile etkileşim halindedir ve her öge eğitim sisteminde önemli bir yere sahiptir. Bununla birlikte eğitim ilk olarak ailede başlamaktadır. Okula başlamadan önce çocukların topluma uyumlu, toplumun kendilerinden ne istediğini anlayabilen çocukların yetişmesinde ilk sorumlu kurumun aile olduğu düşünülmürse ailenin de öğretim programlarından beklentileri ve düşüncelerinin önemli olduğu düşünülmektedir. Çünkü toplumun en küçük modeli olan aile ortamında bireyler toplumla ilgili kuralların, sorunların ve sistemin nasıl işlediğine dair bilgilerin yansımaları bir şekilde ailede hissetmektedirler. Bu denli önemli bir görevi olan sosyal bilgiler dersinde ailelerin çocuklarına hangi konuların öğretilmesi üzerine düşüncelerinin sorulması önem kazanmaktadır. Bu nedenle, bu araştırmanın amacı; bu yaş grubu öğrencilerin ebeveynlerinin sosyal bilgiler dersinde hangi konuların öğretilmesini istediklerini belirlemektir. Araştırma sonucunda elde edilecek sonuçların ebeveynlerin sosyal bilgiler dersinin içeriği ile ilgili olarak ne düzeyde bilgi sahibi olduğuna yönelik katkı sağlayacağı umulmaktadır. Çalışmanın literatürdeki bir boşluğu doldurması ve alan yazına katkı sağlaması bakımından önem arz ettiği düşünülmektedir.

### Yöntem

Bu çalışmada verilerin toplanması, çözümlenmesi ve yorumlanmasında nitel araştırma yöntemi kullanılmıştır. Araştırmanın çalışma grubu Denizli’de 5., 6. ve 7. sınıflarda öğrenim gören öğrencilerin ebeveynlerinden oluşmaktadır. Bu çalışmada belirli soruların cevabını bulma ve görüşme esnasında ek bilgi ile karşılaşılabilme ihtimalleri göz önüne alınarak yarı yapılandırılmış görüşme formu kullanılmıştır. Görüşme soruları açık uçlu sorular içermektedir..

Araştırma verileri, ebeveynlerle yapılan yarı-yapılandırılmış görüşmelerle toplanmıştır. Yarı-yapılandırılmış görüşme, ebeveynlerin sosyal bilgiler dersinde hangi konuların işlenmesini istediklerini anlayabilmek amacıyla tercih edilmiştir. Katılımcıların konuya ilişkin bakış açıları daha derinlemesine anlamak için, onlara ek sorular sorabilmek, sorulara verdikleri cevapları örneklendirmeleri veya ayrıntılı açıklamalarını istemek ve görüşmeleri belli düzende gerçekleştirmek (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007; Marshall & Rossman, 2006) amacıyla yarı-yapılandırılmış görüşme planlanmıştır. Görüşmeler ses kayıt cihazıyla kayıt edilerek gerçekleştirilmiştir. Görüşmede ebeveynlere; “*Sizce sosyal bilgiler dersinde hangi konular öğretilmelidir?*” sorusu yöneltilmiştir.

Araştırmanın verileri içerik analizi aracılığıyla çözümlenmiştir. Bu çerçevede ses kaydı şeklinde elde edilen görüşme verileri; öncelikle çözümlenerek Microsoft Word Yazılımı ile yazıya aktarılmıştır. Yazıya aktarıldıktan sonra veriler kodlanmıştır. Kodlama işlemi tamamlandıktan sonra kodlar arasındaki bağlantılara göre kategoriler ve tema belirlenmiştir. Daha sonra veriler kodlara ve kategorilere göre düzenlenerek sınıflandırılmıştır. Kategoriler 2018 Sosyal Bilgiler Öğretim Programı’nda yer alan öğrenme alanları dikkate alınarak oluşturulmuştur. Ayrıca, katılımcıların görüşlerini daha iyi göstermek ve okuyucunun katılımcıların yaşadıklarının ayrıntılarını görmesine yardımcı olmak amacıyla doğrudan alıntılara yer verilmiştir.



## **Bulgular, Tartışma ve Sonuç**

Bu arařtırmada ailelerin hangi konuların sosyal bilgiler dersinde öğretilmesini istedikleri tespit edilmiştir. Arařtırmada sosyal bilgiler dersinin farklı ebeveynler için farklı anlamlara geldiđi görölmektedir. Bu nedenle arařtırmada görüş bildiren ebeveynlerin çocuklarının özellikleri ve kendi hayat görüşleri doğrultusunda sosyal bilgiler dersinden beklentilerini ifade ettikleri görölmektedir.

Ebeveynlerin çocuklarına öğretilmesini istedikleri konulara bakıldığında; bu konuların en çok “Birey ve Toplum” ile “Etkin Vatandaşlık” öğrenme alanlarında yoğunlaştığı görölrken en az “Bilim Teknoloji ve Toplum” ile “Küresel Bağlantılar” öğrenme alanlarında yoğunlaştığı görölmektedir. Bununla birlikte ebeveynler “Kültür ve Miras” ile “İnsanlar, Yerler ve Çevreler” öğrenme alanlarının içerdiği konulara ilişkin hiç görüş belirtmediđi tespit edilmiştir. Ebeveynlerin görüşlerinden çocuklarının öğrenmesini istediđi konular arasında en çok birey ve yaşadığı toplumla ilgili konular ve siyaset bilimine ilişkin temel bilgilerin olduđu tespit edilmektedir. Ayrıca çocuklarının siyaset okuryazarlığının bazı duyuşsal ve davranışsal boyutlarına da hâkim olmasının önceliklerinin arasında olduđu görölmektedir. Ebeveynlerin siyaset okuryazarlığı içinde olan siyasi partiler, katılım, özgürlük, karar verme ve seçim boyutlarıyla ilgili görüş bildirmedikleri tespit edilmiştir. Ebeveynlerin çocuklarına öğretilmesini istedikleri konular arasında temel siyaset bilgisi ve siyaset okuryazarlığı hakkında görüş bildirmesi; onların geleneksel anlayışın dışına çıktıklarını göstermektedir. Ebeveynler ekonomi okuryazarlığının içinde yer alan bilinçli tüketici olma, üretimin yararları ve salt tüketici olma gibi durumlardan bahsederken; internetin doğru ve bilinçli kullanılması, sosyal medya araçlarını kullanırken dikkatli olunması, internette yer alan bilgilere şüpheyle yaklaşma ve doğruluđunu teyit etme gibi konuları içeren medya okuryazarlığının da önemine değinmiştir. Akhan (2010), çalışmasında velilerin çocuklarının ekonomi okuryazarlıklarının artması yönünde istekli ve kendilerine düşen görevleri bir eğitim almamalarına rağmen yerine getirmeye çalıştıklarını tespit etmiştir.

Tüm ebeveynlerin görüşleri birleştirildiğinde; çocuklarının insan ve çocuk haklarına saygılı, demokrasinin önemini anlamış, Atatürk İlke ve İnkılaplarını benimsemiş, teknolojiyi doğru kullanan, temel siyaset bilgisine ve eleştirel düşünme becerisine sahip, ülkesini ve dünyayı ilgilendiren konulara duyarlı, yaşadığı toplumun sorunlarının farkında olan iyi vatandaşlar olarak yetişmesini istedikleri görölmektedir. Tarhan ve Gedik (2015), çalışmasında öğretmenlerin iyi vatandaşın haklarını bilmesi, toplumsal olaylara duyarlı olması gerektiđini, ülkesindeki sorunlarını bilen ve bu sorunlara çözüm bulmaya çalışan ve bazı temel siyasi kavramlar hakkında bilgi sahibi olan kişi olarak tanımlamıştır. Ebeveynlerin evde öğretilmesini istedikleri konularla ilgili olarak çocuklarıyla konuştuklarını fakat bu konuların pekiştirilmesi ve çocuklarının bu konuları içselleştirilmesi için sosyal bilgiler dersinde konuşulmasını istediklerini belirtmişlerdir. Ebeveynlerin çocuklarının toplumsal hayata hazırlanmasında konuları geređi sosyal bilgiler dersini önemli buldukları görölmektedir. Türe ve Deveci (2021), sosyal bilgiler dersinin ailelerin katılımına dayalı etkinliklerle yürütülmesinin sosyal bilgiler öğretiminin etkililiđinin artmasına katkı sağlayacağını belirtmişlerdir.

Sosyal bilgiler dersinin içerdiği konuların kalıcı olması için öğrencilerin sosyal bilgiler dersinde öğrendiklerini yaşamlarında uygulaması gerekmektedir. Sosyal bilgiler dersinin ailelerin desteđine dayalı etkinliklerle yürütülmesinin sosyal bilgiler konularının öğretilmesinde kalıcılıđın artmasına katkı sağlayacağı söylenebilir. Bu nedenle ebeveynlere sosyal bilgiler dersinde “Aile Katılımına İlişkin Eğitim Etkinlikleri” planlanabilir.