

Social Studies Education in Preschool Period: A Document Review

Derya EKİZ GÜNAL 

Eyup YÜNKÜL ² 

¹ İstanbul Directorate of National Education,
İstanbul, Türkiye

² Balıkesir University, Faculty of Education,
Educational Science Department, Balıkesir,
Türkiye

Received Date 13.02.2024
Accepted Date 24.12.2024
Publication Date 07.03.2025

Corresponding author:

Eyup YÜNKÜL

E-mail: eyunkul@balikesir.edu.tr

Cite this article: Ekiz-Günel, D. & Yünkül E. (2025). Social studies education in preschool period: A document review. *Educational Academic Research*, 56, 156-168.



Content of this journal is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-Noncommercial 4.0 International License.

ABSTRACT

In this study, the research on social studies education in preschool education between 1999 and 2022 was analyzed in detail. A total of 70 studies were examined through YÖK National Thesis Center, ERIC, ULAKBİM, Google Scholar and Turcademy databases. The focal points of the research include sub-problems such as publication year, publication type, subject areas, method, design, study group, data collection tool, stated conclusion and recommendation. Descriptive analysis method was used to analyze the data obtained from the study, which was based on document analysis, one of the qualitative research methods. As a result of the research, it was determined that the majority of the studies examined were carried out in order to reveal the importance and place of teaching social studies and the disciplines within the scope of this course. In addition, it was determined that there has been an increase in the number of studies conducted in the field since 2012 and the most studies were conducted in 2019. Finally, other important findings were that most of the studies in the field were carried out in the form of articles, most of the studies focused on the subject area of geography and were generally conducted with a qualitative research approach.

Keywords: Preschool education, social studies education, document analysis.

Introduction

Preschool education is a process encompassing the early years of life, aimed at reaching all societal levels and shaping individuals' personal development into adulthood. (MHSSCF, 2003; Oguzkan & Oral, 1987). Although there are various opinions on what ages this period covers and how this period should be named (Gulacti, 2014), the 0-6 age range (0-72 months) in which the child begins primary school, usually starting at birth, is considered a pre-school period (Başal, 2005; Choi, 2013; Çelik & Gündoğdu, 2007). It is also evident that there is a general consensus in the relevant literature regarding the importance of this process. Indeed, related research shows that effective teaching during the pre-school period significantly contributes to the development of children's mental capacities and social skills. There are also significant findings in the field of research showing that children receiving pre-school education are more participatory, coherent, and more successful at the next level of education than their non-teaching peers (Gültekin-Akduman, 2012).

The main goal of the investment in pre-school education in Turkey is to reach the same levels as in developed countries. Although recent years have seen a significant

increase in school, student, teacher and classroom numbers, Turkey, with the exception of the 5-year-old group, still lags behind the countries in the Organization for Economic Development and Cooperation (OECD) in terms of the school rates and the number of students per teacher (OECD, 2024). Another important issue that Turkey lacked in preschool education is the context of education that was practiced during this period. Because it is found that countries recognized worldwide as advanced include cognitive, sensory, psychomotor and self-care skills in their pre-school teaching programs, as well as social science disciplines such as social information, history and geography (Kirtel, 2012).

In Turkey, though, socially literate, or especially socio-cultural, as some educators have described it (Coşkun-Keskin & Daysal-Ersoy, 2012; Coşkun-Keskin & Kirtel, 2016; Kirtel, 2018; Kirtel & Almighty, 2019) subjects are not sufficiently featured in the preschool training program, but are required to note that only certain gains and indicators in the field of cognitive and social emotional development are associated with social knowledge (Akhan & Şimşek-Çetin, 2015; Aktın, 2019a; Aktın & Dilek, 2014; MoNE, 2013; Yüksek-Usta & Kizman, 2023).

This is most important because an understanding of pre-school children, particularly those involved in historical discipline, which relied on the notion that they would not be able to learn some concepts of time, has significantly impacted the Turkish education system (Coskun-Keskin & Daysal-Ersoy, 2012). The basis of this understanding is based on Piaget's theory of cognitive development. Piaget and his followers are well known for their views that the concepts and skills needed for historical thinking did not develop until the period of abstract processing (Dilek, 2007). This view influenced educators in many countries, including Turkey, to reduce the historical context for young children before concrete procedures and even eliminate this course altogether (Ata, 1999).

In the following years, both Bruner's history teaching and "the idea that at whatever age any subject of history can be made clear to every child" (Ata, 1999), as well as some educators' views on the ability to teach history to young children (Egan, 1978; 1982) saw a major turning point in this area. At this juncture, some developed countries sought to address the issue because they saw the idea that history lessons should be introduced after the age of 16 by Piaget and his followers, a time too late for them to pass on their values to children who would be members of society as citizens in the future (Ata, 1999).

In the United States (Egan, 2010), one of these countries, where geography, along with history, was not considered "developmentally appropriate" for young children because of its abstract concepts, the problem was solved by the introduction of a social knowledge course into elementary programs (Ata, 1999), which later became available during the pre-school period. This solution enables students today in the United States to begin teaching social information at a pre-school level and to come across subjects relevant to this area at a very early age (Aktın & Dilek, 2014; Yiğit & Sezer, 2009). As another example, students ages 5 to 7 in the UK named Key Stage 1 are offered the chance to teach both historical and geographical subjects (Department for Education [DfE], 2013a; 2013b). It is also known that in Germany, children in pre-school education are presented with issues related to historical discipline (Pamuk, 2020).

Some research in Turkey also suggests that children in pre-school education may have past perceptions developed through different activities (Zembat et al., 2013; Zembat et al., 2014) and shows that they can learn and understand concepts such as the past and time (Ersoy, 2011). However, as Piaget's understanding of abstract processes-concrete processes continues to be effective in Turkey, it is regrettably delayed by the fact that children who are constantly intertwined with social science areas such as

history during the natural flow of their lives receive education in schools for social information/history (Pamuk, 2020). A negative consequence of this delay is that children in pre-schooling Turkey can acquire through social education and be active, responsible (NCSS, 1989) and well-regarded as a citizen (Seefeldt et al., 2015), make their own decisions by understanding the world (Kirtel, 2018), ability to engage in a cause-and-effect relationship, be aware of different cultures (Kirtel, 2018), create a basis for their future by questioning their past (Kirtel, 2012), develop a sense of responsibility, respect for others (Jackman, 2001), and respect and empathize with differences (Yüksek-Usta & Tezel-Şahin, 2022).

Literature screening has shown that studies of social education in Turkey during the pre-school period are studied and there are two important studies using the same research model. The first is a survey by Aktın (2019b) called "Social Information and Pre-School Education". Aktın contributed to the field by examining 40 studies conducted between 1999 and 2018. Another study, Ontas et al., (2021), is "Preschool Reflections of the Lecture on Life Information and Social Information". This study focused on 14 studies published in peer-reviewed journals from 2010 to 2021.

Both have provided valuable contributions to the field. However, it is believed that this study may contribute significantly to the field, as it examines all of the works that have been received from the study, graduate and doctoral dissertation, manifesto, book, book section and translation book types, which were written on social studies in the pre-school period from 1999 to 2022. This comprehensive review will also provide important guidance to individuals who will conduct research as a more detailed picture of studies of social education was presented in the pre-school period. This research aims to illustrate deficiencies and trends in literature by addressing studies in the field of social education in the pre-school period from a broad perspective. A review will be a powerful resource for researchers and educators, especially those who want to keep an eye on developments in this area. It is also seen as a key guideline for future research direction and the adoption of innovative approaches to education.

The aim of this study is to take a look at the studies conducted between 1999 and 2022 on the teaching of social knowledge and disciplines such as history, geography, and economics that formed this field, and to show how the advances in the field reflected in the academic world. Another goal of the study is to establish how the trend in Turkey in studies of social knowledge in the pre-school period and the teaching of disciplines in this

area is active. This is to help guide researchers looking for work in the field by identifying the general situation in pre-school education studies in Turkey on social studies. To address these objectives, the central question of the study is "What are the general trends in the study of social education in the pre-school period from 1999 to 2022?" is set to. To that end, the research's sub-problems were studies of social education from 1999 to 2022; what are the basic causes of publication, publication years, types, subject areas, research methods, patterns, workgroups, data collection tools, and results and recommendations.

Method

Research Design

This research on social studies education was designed and conducted in a qualitative manner. Although qualitative research is usually conducted with direct people, some qualitative researchers can also take advantage of textual methods in their work (Given, 2021). The work was done using one of these techniques: document analysis. In qualitative research, document analysis can be used as an independent method in addition to completing other data collection techniques (Ozkan, 2022).

Data sources of the research

The research was aimed at studying studies in social studies education in the pre-school period from 1999 to 2022. The research's data sources include 66 online and 4 printed sources obtained from the National Thesis Center, ERIC, ULAKBIM, Google Academic and Turcademy databases. These resources are available with the keywords "preschool", "early childhood / early childhood", "education / education", "social studies", "history / history", "geography / geography", "economy / economy" and "citizenship / citizenship". A total of 70 studies have been studied, 40 of them are papers, 11 are graduate studies, 7 are proclamations, 5 are doctoral theses, 4 are book chapters, 2 are books, and 1 are translations. Furthermore, the studies were conducted in Turkey and were careful to include the words "pre-school", "early childhood", "education", "social information", "history", "geography", "economy" and "citizenship" in the words of title or key.

Data Analysis

For analysis of research results, the method of imagery analysis and content analysis was utilized. The main

purpose of the mathematical analysis is to summarize and interpret the data in the research results in accordance with predetermined themes (Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2013). In this context, the resulting data has been systematically and explicitly described first. These statements were then explained, interpreted, and attempted to achieve a variety of results by studying cause and effect relations

In this study, 11 themes have been identified, primarily for the purpose of research, broadcast year, broadcast type, subject areas, method, pattern, workgroup, data collection tool/tools, most important result, and most important advice. Subsequently, 70 studies have been coded A1, A2...A70. These codes and specified themes have been exported to an Excel file and saved the most detailed information of each research based on themes. Finally, 70 studies of social education in the pre-school period were examined based on the themes set out, and the data obtained was presented in tables along with the frequencies. In this study, after the study was determined, two educators specializing in both research and Intel research approaches were exchanged. Researchers regularly hold meetings with these two field educators. In these meetings, researchers jointly evaluated the process (Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2013) by sharing their data, data analysis, and results.

Additionally, analysis of the data has been studied in conjunction with a field educator who has over 10 years experience and is an expert on Intel research. The field educator has exchanged views with the expert and information at points of separation. After the first meeting, the analysis resumed individually, but was reunited and agreed upon at the end of the study. The reliability percentage of the analysis was found to be 90.5%, according to Miles & Huberman's (2015) calculation method ($\text{Reliability} = \frac{\text{Opinion Union}}{\text{Opinion Divide}} + \text{Opinion Divide}$). In addition, a research journal has been created after the research topic has been clarified. This is one of the best ways to organize and document work from beginning to end. This journal has formed the backbone of the study and allowed it to meticulously follow each step and base its findings on a solid basis (Merriam, 2013).

Results

Following are the findings of a study conducted in Turkey between 1999 and 2022 to analyze research on social education in the pre-school period.

Table 1.*The Most Used Purposes in Studies on Social Studies Education in Preschool Period*

Purposes	f
To reveal the importance and place of teaching social studies and the disciplines that make up this field	23
To reveal the applicability of sociocultural education and the competencies that students will gain	10
Giving students the concepts of time and space through various applications, programs and activities	6
Identifying and developing spatial and map reading skills	4
Giving information about teaching practices in this field in different countries	3
Developing students' imagination skills	3
Examine the effects of various approaches and practices on students' knowledge and skill level	3
Improving students' perception of the past	2
Determining the effect of history and geography curriculum on students' emotional intelligence and respect for differences	2
Determining the presence of geographical concepts in storybooks for students	2
Identifying and developing students' historical thinking skills	2
To reveal students' awareness of geographical events and situations	1
Not specified	5
Other	4
Toplam	70

As seen in Table 1, most of the studies on social studies education in preschools between 1999 and 2022 focused on the importance of teaching social studies and the disciplines within the scope of this field and its place in education. For this purpose, it should be noted that most of the research was conducted in the field of social studies education (not in sub-disciplines). The second most researched area was geography education. The applicability of sociocultural education and the competencies to be gained by students draw attention as the second important purpose of the studies carried out in the field. When the studies carried out within the scope of this purpose are examined, it is generally aimed to show how and with which activities sociocultural education can be given, how important Turkish greats such as Mimar Sinan can be learned, how important events and phenomena such as old professions, Çanakkale victory, nevrüz can be presented and how children learn their culture. The third important aim of the studies conducted in the field is to provide preschool students with the concepts of time and space through various applications, programs and activities. Identifying and developing spatial and map reading skills, presenting information about teaching practices in preschool education in different countries, developing preschool students' imagination skills, and revealing the effects of some approaches and

practices on students' knowledge and skill levels have been the objectives stated in studies in this field at similar rates. In the studies on different countries, it was aimed to provide information about the practices in history, social studies and geography teaching in countries such as England, America and Austria. In addition, in the studies that aimed to reveal how preschool children use their imagination skills in historical thinking processes and how they construct the past, the products made by the students from clay and museum visits were utilized for this purpose.

Making sure that the students' perception of the past is enhanced, the history and geography teaching program determines the impact students have on understanding the emotional intelligence and respect for differences, the existence of geographical concepts in storybooks for preschoolers, and the development and development of historical thinking skills of students studying in the pre-school period have been equally emphasized by researchers in their work. Studies conducted to improve historical thinking skills of children studying in the pre-school period require the use of visual timeline and museum outing. Four studies have also been conducted in the field, with the aim in the other category, and five studies showing no purpose of the study.

Table 2.

Publishing Years of Pre-School Studies on Social Information Education

Years	f
1999	1
2001	1
2003	1
2005	1
2006	1
2007	2
2008	2
2009	1
2010	1
2011	3
2012	9
2013	2
2014	7
2015	5
2016	6
2017	5
2018	5
2019	10
2020	2
2021	3
2022	2
Total	70

As seen from Table 2, there has been a significant increase in the number of studies conducted especially in the field since 2012. It is also evident that the most studies of social education in the pre-school period were carried out in 2019 (6 articles, 1 doctoral thesis, 1 book, 1 book section, and 1 statement), and should not be ignored. It is also important to note that the first study of the field was the master's thesis, which was established in 1999 under the discipline of history. However, the earliest works on other types of publications are: it is listed in 2001 as a paper on geography, a memo on civic education in 2007, a book on geography discipline in 2010, a doctoral thesis on geography in 2011, a translation book on social studies education in 2015, and a book in social studies again in 2019.

Table 3.

Types of Studies on Social Studies Education in Preschool Period

Study Type	f
Article	40
Master thesis	11
Declaration	7
PhD thesis	5
Book chapter	4
Book	2
Translated book	1
Total	70

Most of the publications in the field of social studies education in preschool period were articles. As a result of the review conducted within the scope of the research, it was determined that 16 of the relevant articles were in the fields of geography, 11 in social studies, 10 in history and one in economics. In addition, it should be noted that history and geography disciplines were handled together in two articles. Master's theses constitute the second most common type of publication in the related field. It was seen that 5 of the master's theses on social studies education in preschool period were in the field of geography, 3 in the field of social studies and 3 in the field of history. The third priority in the publication types in the field is the papers presented in various platforms. It was determined that 3 of these papers were made in the fields of history and social studies and 1 in the subject areas of citizenship. As seen in Table 3, another type of publication in the specified time interval is doctoral dissertations. It was determined that 2 of these doctoral dissertations were prepared in a way to cover different subject areas (history and geography), 2 in geography and 1 in social studies. In addition, it was found that 4 book chapters were written in the related field, 2 of which were related to social studies and 2 of which were related to geography discipline. Finally, it should be stated that the other types of publications in the related field are books and translated books prepared for social studies teaching.

Table 4.

Subject Areas of Studies on Social Studies Education in Preschool Period

Subject Area	f
Geography	27
Social Studies Education	23
History	18
Citizenship	1
Economy	1
Total	70

Geography has been the field in which the most studies on social studies education in preschool period have been conducted. In the studies conducted on the subject area of geography, the importance of geography teaching in preschool education, spatial skills training and the presence of geographical achievements in the preschool curriculum were generally emphasized. The second most frequent studies in the related field are directly related to social studies education. It is understood that the studies on social studies education focused on sociocultural education, interest levels of teachers and prospective teachers in social studies education and the importance of social studies education in preschool period. History was

the third subject area with the highest number of studies. It is understood that the studies conducted in the field of history generally focused on teaching the concept of time in preschool education and developing chronological thinking skills, determining children's imagination skills in the historical thinking process, increasing children's perception of the past, and revealing the importance of history education in early childhood. In addition, it should be emphasized that four studies in the field addressed the subject areas of history and geography together, and one study was conducted in the fields of citizenship and economy.

Table 5.

Research Methods of Studies on Social Studies Education in Preschool Period

Research Method	f
Qualitative	51
Quantitative	18
Mixed	1
Total	70

It is seen that qualitative methods have been adopted in a great majority (51) of the studies on social studies education in preschool period. The second most utilized method type in the related field was quantitative with 18 studies. In addition, it should be noted that mixed method, which aims to obtain more comprehensive findings by using qualitative and quantitative methods together, was utilized in only one study.

Table 6.

Patterns of Studies on Social Studies Education in Preschool Period

Research Design	f
Case study	12
Experimental	11
Action research	11
Scanning	9
Document analysis	5
Quasi-experimental	2
Phenomenology	1
Not specified	20
Total	71

As can be seen in Table 6, the studies on social studies education in preschool period between 1999 and 2022 show diversity in terms of designs. The most commonly used design in these studies is the case study. The case study design was generally used in articles, master's theses and papers. It is seen that the second most frequently used designs in the studies in the field are experimental and action research. The experimental design was employed in

master's and doctoral theses and articles. It was understood that the studies in the action research design were articles, master's and doctoral theses and papers. The third design utilized in the studies was survey. With this design, studies in the form of articles, master's theses and papers have been put forward. In addition, it is understood that document analysis is another important design utilized in the studies in the field. It was determined that the studies conducted with this design consisted of articles and book chapters. Finally, it should be stated that 20 of the studies on social studies education in preschool period did not specify which research design was utilized.

Table 7.

Study Group of the Studies on Social Studies Education in Preschool Period

Working Group/Data Sources	f
Preschool children	37
Pre-school teachers	11
Pre-school teacher candidates	5
Document	2
Academic staff	1
Not specified	17
Total	73

As can be seen from the information in Table 7, preschool children constitute the participant group in which the most studies were conducted in the related field. It was determined that these studies conducted with preschool children were articles, master's theses, doctoral dissertations and papers. Preschool teachers stand out as the second most preferred study group by researchers in this field. The studies conducted with preschool teachers were in the form of articles and master's theses. Pre-service teachers constitute the third most preferred study group. It was determined that the studies conducted with pre-service teachers were articles, papers and master's theses. In addition, it was seen that preschool teachers and students were used together as the study group in one paper study, and documents and preschool teachers were used together as the study group in one article and one master's thesis. Finally, it should be noted that only one article included academic staff as the study group and 17 studies did not provide any information about the study group.

Table 8.*Data Collection Tools*

Data Collection Tool	f
Interview	27
Document	12
Observation	11
Student products	11
Scale	9
Video recordings	8
Form	8
Survey	8
Test	7
Events	5
Drama	4
Visual materials	2
Software	1
Not specified	10
Total	123

The interview draws attention as the most used data collection tool in the studies conducted in the related field. The second most preferred data collection tool in the studies on social studies education in preschool period was document, and the third data collection tools were observation and student products. In the studies utilizing student products, it is seen that the researchers collected data through student drawings and products made with clay. In the related studies, scales, video recordings, questionnaires and tests were the most preferred data collection tools. Activities draw attention as another data collection tool used in the studies in the field. In these studies, researchers generally obtained data through games, painting, music, nature and three-dimensional activities. Drama, visual materials and software were the least preferred data collection tools in the studies. In the studies utilizing visual materials, tools such as timelines, oil lamps, stoves and jugs were used. In addition, it should be emphasized that 10 studies in this field did not provide any information about the data collection tool.

Table 9.*Results of Studies on Social Studies Education in Preschool Period*

Results	f
Students can understand the concepts of past and present through appropriate education, activities and programs	16
Teaching social studies and the disciplines within the scope of this course can provide students with important competencies and skills	16
Social studies and the disciplines included in this course should be included in pre-school education	11
The concepts and acquisitions related to the geography discipline within the scope of the social studies course are included in preschool curricula	2
The concepts and acquisitions related to the geography discipline within the scope of the social studies course are not sufficiently included in the preschool curriculum	2
The teaching of social studies and the disciplines within the scope of this course is appropriate to the developmental level of students	2
The teaching of social studies and the disciplines within the scope of this course is not appropriate for the developmental level of students	2
Some programs implemented in preschool education period are effective in the development of students' spatial perception and skills	2
In different countries, the teaching of social studies and the disciplines within the scope of this course starts in the preschool period	1
In recent years, there has been a significant increase in the number of studies in this field	1
The achievements related to the geography discipline within the scope of the social studies course are given with activities in other fields	1
Students are interested in the discipline of geography within the scope of social studies course	1
Not specified	8
Other	3
Unreachable	2
Total	70

The first of the most important results obtained from the studies on social studies education in preschool period is that students can understand the concepts of past and time if appropriate education, activities and programs are provided. In these studies, education, activities and programs that enable students to understand the concepts of past and time were expressed as museum visits, sociocultural education, computer-assisted education, Turkish language activities, a day in the Ottoman Empire, art activities and creative activity programs. It is noteworthy that teaching social studies and the disciplines within the scope of this field can provide students with important competencies and skills. In these studies, these competencies and skills were stated as map and globe reading, scientific thinking, imagination, environmental sensitivity, geographical awareness, and developing an understanding of the immediate environment and the world. As can be seen from the table, the second important

result in the studies analyzed is the inclusion of teaching social studies and the disciplines such as geography and history in preschool education. It should be emphasized that the studies in this category were generally conducted with preschool teachers and prospective teachers. In addition, in these studies, the subject areas to be acquired in preschool education period were stated as geography, social studies and history respectively. Starting the teaching of social studies and the disciplines within the scope of this course in the preschool period draws attention as one of the important results of the studies conducted in this field. Again, the fact that there has been a significant increase in the number of studies conducted in the field in recent years and that the achievements in the field of geography are given through science / nature / mathematics activities are results that can be considered important although they are stated in one study.

Table 10.

Suggestions in Studies on Social Studies Education in Preschool Period

Recommendations	f
Including courses on social studies and the disciplines that make up this field in pre-school undergraduate education	18
Including achievements, indicators and activities related to social studies and the disciplines that make up this field in preschool curricula	17
Utilizing activities, programs and practices to develop children's time, space and historical imagination skills	5
Training pre-school educators on some historical and geographical concepts	3
Utilizing out-of-school environments to improve students' understanding of history	2
Including the achievements implicitly related to history in the pre-school curriculum under the title of history teaching	2
Combating the negative views that history and geography cannot be taught in preschool period	2
Conducting research on how geography teaching in preschool period is done in different countries	1
Other	4
Not specified	13
Unreachable	3
Total	70

As can be seen in Table 11, the highest level of recommendation in the studies on social studies education in preschool period is to include courses on social studies and the disciplines that make up this field in undergraduate programs. The disciplines that were most frequently suggested to be included in preschool undergraduate programs were geography and social studies, respectively. In one study, social studies and history disciplines were handled under a single title and suggested to be added to preschool undergraduate programs. Including outcomes, indicators and activities covering social studies and its sub-disciplines in preschool education programs is the second suggestion that comes to the fore in the studies in the related field. The areas mentioned in this regard are social studies, geography and history. The use of activities,

programs and practices that will help develop children's time, space and historical imagination skills in early childhood emerges as a third recommendation in this regard. While some studies in this category suggested named programs such as computer-assisted instruction and spatial perception training to develop time, space and historical imagination skills in early childhood, other studies used more general terms such as in and out-of-school activities and different educational practices. Providing training to preschool educators on concepts related to history/geography disciplines such as time and space is a relatively high ranked suggestion in this regard. In addition, making use of out-of-school environments such as museums and historical environments in order to improve the historical understanding of students studying in this

period, presenting the acquisitions related to history, which are implicitly included in preschool curricula, under the name of this discipline, and making an effort to eliminate the negative thoughts that history and geography cannot be taught in preschool period through appropriate activities are also frequently mentioned suggestions.

Discussion

As it is known, since the concept of time is abstract, it is one of the most difficult concepts to acquire in preschool education (Kol, 2012). However, despite this difficulty, if appropriate activities are used, children can use time-related concepts correctly and show the ability to establish relationships between these concepts (Coşkun-Keskin & Kirtel, 2016). Similarly, preschool teachers in the study conducted by Er et al. (2022) also stated perceiving space as the geographical subject/skills that children have the most difficulty in this period.

In the studies analyzed, computer-assisted instruction was one of the tools used to teach students the concept of time. Aktın & Dilek (2016) also mentioned computer-assisted instruction as one of the approaches to be utilized in teaching the concept of time to preschool children. In addition, maps were also seen to be one of the tools utilized for this purpose. As it is known, maps are one of the important materials that can be used to concretize abstract concepts. In particular, finding and marking the names of places and places on the map by children can help them concretize abstract places (Kirtel, 2018). Due to the important feature of maps, it is seen that some studies in the field have made use of this material in order for students to concretize the concept of space.

It is understood that the first study in the field was a master's thesis in 1999 within the scope of history discipline. In addition, it was determined that the first studies in other types of publications were; an article in the field of geography in 2001, a paper within the scope of citizenship education in 2007, a book chapter on geography discipline in 2010, a doctoral dissertation on geography in 2011, a translated book in the field of social studies education in 2015, and a book written in the field of social studies in 2019. In addition, the number of studies in the related field has increased since 2012 and the highest number of studies was conducted in 2019. It should be noted that these findings obtained from the research overlap with the findings obtained from Aktın's (2019b) study.

It was determined that the most common types of publications in the related field were articles, master's theses, papers, doctoral dissertations, book chapters, books and translated books, respectively. An important

point to be noted here is that only one of the books produced in the countries that come to the forefront in the field of social studies education in preschool period and are characterized as developed has been brought to the field through translation. Aktın (2019b) also states in his study that there is only one translated book on social studies education in preschool period, which supports this finding obtained from this study.

The discipline with the most studies in social studies education has been determined to be geography. Akhan and Şimşek-Çetin (2015) also emphasize that geography education is one of the most heavily weighted disciplines in the field of research in Turkey. Studies within this discipline usually focus on the importance of early childhood geography education, the training of spatial skills in children, and the existence of geographically related achievements in early childhood programs. Aktın's (2019b) observations that geography teaching during pre-school education in Turkey was focused on the location and importance of geography education and on spatial skills supported the results of this research. The second highest study was in social studies. Aktın's (2019b) study also found that the most studied areas during the pre-school period were geography, history education, and social studies, respectively. The second position of social information in this research is illustrated by the fact that studies of social studies in the interim have increased in number from historical discipline. Studies in social studies have been mainly focused on socio-cultural education, the levels of interest in teaching social information for pre-school teachers and teachers, and the importance of teaching social knowledge in the pre-school period. Aktın's (2019b) study also found that one of the topics that was prominent in research on social education in the pre-school period was the study's significance.

History has been the third most studied discipline in the field. Studies in connection with history discipline have generally focused on the teaching of time and the development of chronological thinking skills in children, determining children's vision skills, ensuring better perception of the past in children, and expressing the importance of history education in the pre-school period. Aktın (2019b) also notes that studies of history teaching in Turkey during the pre-school period focused on time in the early years, but increased research aimed at developing historical thinking skills in young children in the following years. It also reveals that some studies of the field involved have been prepared to include the disciplines of history and geography. History and geography are known as the two major areas of pre-school education programs that complement one another, especially social studies (Güler &

Tugrul, 2007). And there's a lot of overlap between the disciplines of history and geography. Both disciplines seek to explore similar sources in order to demonstrate how people live, work, faith, home, food, and dress (Cooper, 2002). It is thought that these overlaps and similarities between the two fields may have been influential in some researchers in taking the disciplines of history and geography together. Finally, it is important to say that the least work on the field is done on civic education and economy, with the same frequency. This finding is supported by the findings of Aktin's (2019b) research.

In studies examined under the study, the most frequently favored pattern is state work, while experimental and action research is highlighted in the relevant field as the same frequently and second-preferred patterns. Aktin's (2019b) research in this area found that the most experimental work was done in the preliminary test-final test model, and in particular in the article type, research from qualitative research approaches to action research and case study. This difference can be explained by the fact that in studies in the time period that passes, the case study pattern is preferred by researchers more often. In pre-school studies of social education, the most favored working groups were students, teachers, and teachers, respectively. However, the fact that academics with a very important presence in the field may merely have participated in the study itself is considered a significant deficiency.

The most commonly used data collection tool in the study has been interviews. In addition, documents are determined to be second-hand observation and third-preferred data collection tools. Forms, video recordings, and surveys have all been centered on the work done in the field as an equally frequent data collection tool. Gökteş et al. (2012) found that surveys are among the most commonly used data collection tools in educational research in Turkey. Contrary to this finding, we may find that the adoption of a largely qualitative research approach to the medium range of studies conducted in the field has been effective. Testing and events have been the bottom-up data collection tools for training social information in the pre-school period. Research using activities as a data retrieval tool has found that Turkish language, painting, music, nature, 3D studies and gaming are used. Games have a vital role in helping children explore the world they've lived in and their relationship with it (Cooper, 2002). Games are considered to be one of the tools for the event, as well as for training social information (Kirtel, 2018). Some researchers might say that they use games to harness these characteristics in the data collection phase. In the most recent studies in the field, drama, visual material, and game-based software have been found to be used as a data

collection tool. Using visual materials as a data collection tool, preferred tools are shown in timelines, kandil, stove and pitcher. As it turns out, studies of social education in the pre-school period have collected data from various sources. Similarly, Aktin (2019b) emphasizes that researchers generally obtain data from a variety of sources in the field.

One of the first results from studies in the field is that children in pre-school settings through appropriate training, events and programs can understand past and time concepts. Museum trips are described in these studies as one of the activities that allow students to understand past and time concepts. Museums, as it's known, are alternative learning environments that provide information about events that occurred in the past through concrete findings to people. Museums now have training workshops within them and are now able to travel with children from the pre-school education level. When providing information about the abstract past during these travels, connecting children with objects from the past to the present can help them better understand history (Akyol & Köksal-Akyol, 2017). Other education, events and programs that help students in pre-school years to better understand past and time concepts have been highlighted as socio-cultural education, computer-aided education, Turkish language activity, a day in the Ottoman Empire, and art events. Art is one of the most important tools that can be used in this period for children to learn about the past. One of these works, in particular, is considered important both for attracting children and for them to recognize that these works were created by people with very different lifestyles in the past (Harnett, 2014). The study of social knowledge and the disciplines that make up this space is the second important conclusion that has been mentioned in the studies. These include areas that were intended for pre-school education, geography, social information, and history, respectively. Öntaş et al. (2021) concluded in their research that the most important results of studies on life information and social information education in the preschool period were that social information and life information fields should also be addressed during the preschool period. Another conclusion of the study was that. In different countries such as the United States, social knowledge and the history of this field began teaching in the pre-school period. Indeed, during the pre-school period, the United States was noted as one of the countries involved in social studies teaching programs (Akhan & Şimşek-Çetin, 2015; Aktin, 2014; NCSS (1994). There has been a significant increase in the number of relevant field studies over the past 10 years, and other results stated in the study of science/nature/mathematics activities of the achievements in geography discipline within the social

studies course. As highlighted by Baysan & Aydogan (2016), Turkish pre-school education programs are intended to serve as a basis for geography teaching at the highest levels of educational institutions, often offered as part of science activities (science-nature and mathematics) related to geography.

In studies, it has been shown that the most expressed recommendation is to include social knowledge and disciplines in pre-school undergraduate programs at universities. In the United States, some universities with a bachelor's degree in pre-school education are known to feature classes for teaching social studies in their programs. (Akhan & Şimşek-Çetin, 2015). Researchers at Turkey also seem to believe in the importance of this practice and to propose suggestions for social information and the disciplines involved in pre-school teaching programs. The most recommended areas for participation in the undergraduate training programs were geography and social information, respectively. Historical discipline has been expressed in one study alone along with social knowledge. The promotion of social knowledge and participation in pre-school education programs and disciplines in this area is the second most cited proposal in the study examined. In the context of this proposal, the first required field to be included in pre-school education programs is social information, followed by geography. The discipline of history has also been expressed once, in conjunction with the fields of social knowledge and geography. The third frequently mentioned recommendation in the field concerned; this is to utilize events, programs and applications that help students in the training step develop time, venue, and historical imaging skills. It is another important proposal in this area to offer pre-school teachers training for the time and place concepts associated with the history/geography disciplines. Furthermore, the use of out-of-school environments such as museums and historical surroundings to improve pre-school students' understanding of history is the same frequently cited in studies concerning the discipline in which historically relevant achievements are presented in the pre-school education program, and the study of obstructing adverse considerations for the inability to teach subjects such as history and geography through proper activities.

Conclusion and Recommendations

As a result of the research, it was seen that the most prominent purpose in the studies examined was to reveal the importance and place of teaching social studies and the disciplines that make up this field. The applicability of sociocultural education in the preschool education period

and the competencies that students can gain are the second most important aims emphasized in this regard. The aims expressed in this context are; how sociocultural education can be given to children, which activities can be used, how important events and facts can be presented, and how important Turkish elders can be learned. In fact, the desire to provide preschool children with information about important historical figures who played a role in the history of their country is not unique to Turkey. For example, in England, one of the most important aims of history education, which is called Key Stage 1 and covers children between the ages of 5-7, is to provide students with information about important historical figures in their own past (Harnett, 2014). As another example, in the history/social sciences program implemented in the state of California in the United States of America, it is known that teachers are asked to introduce historical figures who stand out in American history with their honesty, courage and patriotism to their students (HSSFCS, 2017). Providing preschool students with the concepts of time and space through various practices, programs, and activities is the third important goal stated in the studies analyzed.

The following recommendations are available in light of research findings.

- In Turkey, studies of social education in the pre-school period have increased, especially since 2012. However, more research is needed in Turkey than in other countries around the world, where studies in this area are not sufficient.
- Research findings suggest that postgraduate studies in this area are not yet available as desired. Postgraduate studies, especially in the common counseling of academics specializing in pre-school and social studies, are thought to be of considerable value to the field.
- The study found that there were only two original and one translation book in the field of social studies education during the pre-school period. Researchers in Turkey have produced books and translations in this field, which could help fill a significant gap.
- In the relevant field of history education, the lack of studies is evident in the development of historical thinking skills and past perceptions of children. The implementation of activities that focus on these aspects can make a significant contribution to the field.
- Research findings show that the least studies conducted in the context of social studies

education during the pre-school period were done in the economic and civic education sectors. For this reason, more research can be done in areas such as economics and civic education, focusing on education of social knowledge in the pre-school period.

- Research findings show that in studies in the field, academics are the least favored group of researchers. For this reason, studies can be conducted in the pre-school period, detailing the views of specialized academics for the education of social information.
- This research aims to establish general trends by examining studies of social education in Turkey during the pre-school period. Likewise, research can be done in other countries to examine the trends of related studies.
- In Turkey, similar research on a regular basis may be useful in order to determine the general situation and shortcomings of teaching social information in a pre-school period.

Ethics Committee Approval: Ethics committee permission was not obtained as it was a review study.

Informed Consent: : Informed consent was not obtained as this was a Review study.

Peer-review: Externally peer-reviewed.

Author Contributions: Concept-DEK, EY; Design- DEK, EY; Supervision- DEK, EY; Resources- DEK, EY; Data Processing- DEK, EY; Analysis and Interpretation- DEK, EY; Literature Search- DEK, EY; Writing Manuscript- DEK, EY; Critical Review- DEK, EY;

Conflict of Interest: The authors have no conflicts of interest to declare.

Financial Disclosure: The authors declared that this study has received no financial support.

References

- Akhan, N. E., & Şimşek-Çetin, Ö. (2015). A study of the interest and views towards social studies education among preschool teacher candidates. *Eğitimde Kuram ve Uygulama*, 11 (2), 551-588.
- Aktın, K. (2014). Preschool social studies education: a case study related to the teaching of the professions. *Turkish Studies*, 9(5), 139-155.
- Aktın, K. (2019a). *Pre-service preschool teachers' reflections on their experiences in early childhood social studies education*. 8th International Symposium on Social Studies Education Proceedings Book In (pp. 190-210). Kalem.
- Aktın, K. (2019b). Social studies and pre-school education. In İ. H. Demircioğlu, S. Kaymakçı & E. Demircioğlu (Eds.), *Handbook of social studies education research in Turkey* (pp.423-452). Pegem.
- Aktın, K., & Dilek, G. (2014). History teaching in pre-school history/social studies curricula: Example of U.S. *International Journal Of Eurasia Social Sciences*, 5(16), 36-56.
- Aktın, K., & Dilek, D. (2016). Chronological thinking at preschool period: A case study. *Sakarya University Journal of Education*, 6(3), 129-144.
- Akyol, A. A., & Köksal-Akyol, A. (2017). Drama practices in museums and archaeological sites. *Yaratıcı Drama Dergisi, Journal of Creative Drama*, "Müze Özel Sayısı", 105-126.
- Ata, B. (1999). A research on the reflection of Piaget and Bruner's views on history teaching in primary education in England. *Pamukkale University Journal of Education*, (6).
- Başal, H. A. (2005). *Practical environmental education for children*. Morpa.
- Baysan, S., & Aydoğan, S. (2016). Developing a Geographical Concepts Test (CKT) suitable for preschool and primary school children. *Journal of Human Sciences*, 13(3), 5500-5514.
- Choi, J. (2013). *A study of the preschool education in Turkey and South Korea* [Doctoral dissertation, Marmara University-Istanbul]. Council of Higher Education National Thesis Centre.
- Cooper, H. (2002). *History in the early years*. Roudledge.
- Coşkun-Keskin, S., & Daysal-Ersoy, D. (2012). A case study on socio-cultural education in early childhood: Mimar Sinan. *International Online Journal of Educational Sciences*, 4(1), 117-130.
- Çoşkun-Keskin, S., & Kirtel, A. (2016). Socio-cultural education in early childhood: a day in the Ottoman Empire. *Abant İzzet Baysal University Journal of Faculty of Education*, 16, (USBES Special Issue II), 1469-1490.
- Çelik, M., & Gündoğdu, K. (2007). Historical process of early childhood education in Turkey. *Journal of Kazım Karabekir Education Faculty*, (16), 172-190.
- Department for Education (DfE) (2013a). National Curriculum in England; history programmes of study. London, DfE. https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/239035/PRIMARY_national_curriculum_-_History.pdf (Erişim tarihi: 12.12.2022).
- Department for Education (DfE) (2013b). National Curriculum in England; geography programmes of study. London, DfE. https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/239044/PRIMARY_national_curriculumGeography.pdf (Erişim tarihi: 12.12.2022).
- Deveci, H., & Şerefli Güney, B. (2024). Teaching social studies course in different teaching levels in Turkey according to social studies teacher candidates. *Van Yüzüncü Yıl Üniversitesi Eğitim Fakültesi Dergisi*, 21(2), 573-595. <https://doi.org/10.33711/yyuefd.1413554>
- Dilek, D. (2007). *Learning and thought development in history lessons*. Nobel.
- Egan, K. (1978). Varieties of history. *Teaching History*, 21, 20-23.
- Egan, K. (1982). Teaching history to young children. *The Phi Delta Kappan*, 63(7), 439-441.

- Egan, K. (2010). *Educated mind*. (Çev: F. Keser). Pegem.
- Er, H., Karadeniz, O., & Belge, M. (2022). Teaching geography skills from the perspective of teachers in preschool education. *MANAS Journal of Social Studies*, 11(3), 991-1005. <https://doi.org/10.33206/mjss.1005257>
- Ersoy, D. D. (2011). *Socio-cultural education in early childhood: Famous Turkish elders* [Doctoral dissertation, Sakarya University-Sakarya]. Council of Higher Education National Thesis Centre.
- Given, L. M. (2021). *Qualitative research in 100 questions*. A. Bakla, & İ. Çakır (Çev.), Anı.
- Göktaş, Y., Yeşildağ-Hasançebi, F., Varışoğlu, B., Akçay, A., Bayrak, N., Baran, M., & Sözbilir, M. (2012). Trends in educational research in Turkey: A content analysis. *Educational Sciences in Theory and Practice*, 12(1), 443-460.
- Gülaçtı, F. (2014). Early childhood and preschool education in Turkey and the world. In F. Gülaçtı, & S. Tümkaya (Eds.), *Early childhood education* (pp.1-21). Pegem.
- Güler, T. & Tuğrul, B. (2007). History and geography education in the field of social work for preschool children. *Çukurova University Faculty of Education Journal*, 3(33), 29-35.
- Gültekin Akduman, G. (2012). Definition and importance of pre-school education. In G. Uyanık Balat (Ed.), *Introduction to pre-school education* (pp. 2-17). Pegem.
- Harnett, P. (2014). The history curriculum in primary education in England: Opportunities and challenges, Sakarya: III. International History Education Symposium, Proceedings Full Text Book, pp.7-10.
- HSSFCPS. (2017). *History social science framework for California public schools kindergarten through grade twelve*. <https://www.cde.ca.gov/ci/hs/cf/documents/hssframeworkwhole.pdf> (Erişim tarihi: 22.10.2020).
- Jackman, H. L. (2001). *Early education curriculum: A child's connection to the World*. (Second edition). Delmar Thomson Learning.
- Kirtel, A. (2012). *Socio-cultural education in early childhood: some significant events and facts belongs to Turkish history* (Publication No. 350156) [Masters's thesis, Sakarya University-Sakarya]. Council of Higher Education National Thesis Centre.
- Kirtel, A. (2018). *Implementation of socio-cultural activities prepared for children aged 60-72 months*. [Doctoral dissertation, Sakarya Üniversitesi-Sakarya]. Council of Higher Education National Thesis Centre.
- Kirtel, A., & Yüceer, D. (2019). *Social studies education in early childhood: Socio-cultural education with activities*. Gece.
- Kol, S. (2012). *The effect of computer-assisted instruction (CAI) on the acquisition of time and space concepts by six-year-old children* [Doctoral dissertation, Selçuk University-Konya]. Council of Higher Education National Thesis Centre.
- MoNE. (2013). *Pre-school education program*. Ministry of Education.
- Merriam, S. B. (2013). *Qualitative research: a guide to design and implementation*. (Translation from the third edition: S. Turan). Nobel.
- Miles M. B., & Huberman, A. M. (2015). *Qualitative data analysis: An extended sourcebook*. (Translation from 2nd edition: S. Akbaba-Altun & A. Ersoy). Nobel.
- MHSSCF (2003). *Massachusetts history and social science curriculum framework*. <http://www.doe.mass.edu/frameworks/hss/final.pdf>.
- NCSS (1989). *Social studies for early childhood and elementary school children preparing for the 21st century*. *Social Education*, 53(1), 14-23.
- NCSS (1994). *Expectations of excellence: Curriculum standards for social studies*. Washington.
- Oğuzkan, Ş., & Oral, G. (1987). *Secondary girls' technical education schools, pre-school education*. Ministry of National Education.
- OECD (2024). *Enrolment rates in early childhood education and care services and primary education by year of age, 3- to 5-year-olds*. https://www.oecd.org/els/soc/pf3_2_enrolment_childcare_preschool.pdf
- Öntaş, T., Çarıkçı, S., & Arkan-Sezgin, K. (2021). Reflections on life sciences and social studies at preschool level. *International Journal of New Approaches in Social Studies*, 5(2), 454-471.
- Özkan, U. B. (2022). *Document review method for educational sciences research*. Pegem.
- Pamuk, İ. (2020). The use of history in life studies textbooks in Germany. *Turkish History Education Journal*, 9(1), 209-231.
- Seefeldt, C., Castle, S., & Falconer, R. C. (2015). *Social studies teaching for preschool and primary school children*. S. Coşkun Keskin (Translation. Ed.) Nobel.
- Yıldırım, A., & Şimşek, H. (2013). *Qualitative research methods in social sciences*. (9th Expanded Edition): Seçkin.
- Yiğit, Ö., & T. Sezer (2009). Social studies education in preschool period. *Journal of Çoluk Çocuk*, 87, 10-13.
- Yüksek-Usta, S., & Tezel-Şahin, F. (2022). Preschool history geography curriculum and its effects on emotional intelligence. *International Journal of Psychology and Educational Studies*, 9(2), 376-389. <https://doi.org/10.52380/ijpes.2022.9.2.616>
- Yüksek-Usta, S., & Kimzan, İ. (2023). Social Studies in Early Childhood Education Programs: The Case of the United States. *Ankara University Journal of Faculty of Educational Sciences (JFES)*, 56(3), 1241-1302. <https://doi.org/10.30964/auabfd.1109289>
- Zembat, R., Beceren Özdemir, B., Şengül, T., & Ünsal, F. Ö. (2013). 6 year old preschool children's perception of "past". *Issues on Education and Research*, 3, 299-311.
- Zembat, R., Ünsal, F. Ö., Yazıcı, F., Kurtuluş-Küçükoğlu, E., Yıldız, Ö., & Tunçeli, H. İ. (2014). My own past: An example of family involvement project applied to improve 48-54 months old children's perception of the past. *International Journal on New Trends in Education and Their Implications*, 5(1), 209-218.