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INVESTIGATION OF SOCIAL STUDIES TEACHERS' REFLECTIVE THINKING LEVELS IN TERMS OF SOCIO-DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS (AN EXAMPLE OF ŞANLIURFA PROVINCE)

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ABSTRACT

This research is a descriptive study for determining the reflective thinking levels of the social studies teachers. The universe of the study is the social studies teachers working in Şanlıurfa within 2009-2010 education year. Due to the accessibility of the universe of the study, no sampling was employed for the research, 277 social studies teachers working in the towns and villages of Şanlıurfa provinces participated in the study voluntarily. In order to analyze the data collected by means of Reflective Teaching Tendency Scale by Semerci (2007), arithmetic mean, standard deviation, ANOVA, Mann Whitney U, Kruskall Wallis, and LSD tests were used. At the end of the study it was found that while the reflective thinking levels of the social study teachers were found very high, their most positive perception related to the reflective thinking skills was "Open-minded" dimension. Although there is no meaningful difference in the statistics performed, it was found that female teachers have a higher reflective thinking tendency in interrogating and effective teaching, teaching responsibility and scientific, researching, being foresighted and sincere dimensions and have more positive perceptions about their profession. While there is no meaningful difference on the reflective thinking levels of the teachers on the basis of the length of service and the size of the location (province, district, village) they serve, it was found that the teachers with a length of service between 11 and 15 years have a higher reflective thinking tendency.

Keywords: *Social studies, Teacher, Reflective thinking*

INTRODUCTION

As a result of the explosion of information and globalization in our age, communities that are nearly nested are being influenced by each other, living conditions are getting harder and in face of these conditions values may lose validity. According to Chappin & Messick (1992, p.18) because of the developing technology in our age, even preschool children begin to realize the international social problems like arming, wars, pollution, hunger, poverty, racial discrimination, economic crisis etch. This situation makes it mandatory to train individuals who can use knowledge by reasoning instead of just storing it as it is (Bolat, 2008, p.3; Doğanay, 2007, p.281) and different viewpoints about how purpose, content and teaching of social studies which is an interdisciplinary work field for performing the social existence of an individual are formed. According to Ran (2004, p. 2–3) understanding of social studies, whose origin is to train active citizens, focuses nowadays on respecting rights and values, understanding cultural differences, fusing its individual and social responsibilities, questioning social values, creating new values, realizing important problems of the world and society in

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which one lives and developing attitudes and skills directed to seek peaceful solutions. (Martorella, 1998, p. 227). For this purpose content of social studies was enriched with social (cooperative) activities helping to develop problem solving and individual activities. (Martorella, 1996, cited in Özcan, 2002, p.30). In our country it can be seen that social studies curriculum focusing on transferring citizenship duties and responsibilities (Kocaoluk and Kocaoluk, 2000, p. 691–692), changed in this way until 2005. It was developed for becoming reflective work field. According to this approach, the purpose of social studies is to analyze students' individual and social problems, to develop their processes of decision making. Life is regarded as problem solving cycle and school is no more a place that certain content is transferred but a place that problem solving logic is perceived (Öztürk, 2006, p.26). So it can be seen that social studies lesson- whose main aim is to have students to gain skills, knowledge and values- aims to have the students train reflective thinking skills which is expressed as regulating the knowledge into daily life, analyzing and driving forward one's own unique opinion by using his knowledge (MEB, 2005).

According to Lee (2005, p.700) as a problem solving process, reflective thinking necessitates constantly evaluation of beliefs and assumptions against existing knowledge and their reasonable comments, eventually they reached judgment becomes the product of synthesis which is integrated with opposite point of view (King and Kitchener, 1994, p. 47-73). In this condition it can be said that reflective thinking, as a research which relies on solving the problem encountered, is a skill which overlaps creative thinking with encouraging production of new ideas, critical thinking with the self-evaluation dimension, metacognitive thinking process with connecting with one's experiences and considering about one's own thoughts dimension (Yorulmaz, 2006, p.30). In order to develop student's reflective thinking skills teachers need to have and apply these thinking skills. If the structure of the sciences that form the content of social studies (economy, law, sociology, history, art, politics, psychology, anthropology etch.) and its aims mentioned above are taken into account, it is extremely important to develop the abilities like feeling the problems of students in teaching-learning process, understanding, creating alternatives and convert them into action. But in our country there are no known researches about reflecting thinking skills of social studies teachers yet. It can be seen that known researches are generally made on pre-service teachers or primary school teachers (Ekiz, 2006; Erginel, 2006; Güney, 2008; İskenderoğlu, 1999; Kaf Hasırcı & Sadık, 2009; Kozan, 2007; Köksal & Demirel, 2008; Oruç, 2000; Tok, 2008). Because of these reasons it is needed to carry out a research which examines social studies teachers' reflective thinking level in Şanlıurfa, and it was sought to answer the following questions:

1. What are the levels of social studies teachers' reflective thinking tendencies?
2. Do the Social studies teacher's reflective thinking levels show any significant difference according to their gender, seniority, graduation, working place and number of students in their classrooms?

METHOD

Research Model

This is a descriptive research performed to determine the social studies teachers' reflective thinking levels.

Sample and Population

The population of this study is the social studies teachers working in Şanlıurfa Province. Due to the accessibility of the population of the study, no sampling was employed. All of the teachers working in villages, town center and city center of Şanlıurfa took part in this study. A total of 277 teachers participated in the survey on a voluntary basis, 60 women and 217 men. 87 teachers are from villages, 85 are from districts, 105 are from city centers of Şanlıurfa Province. 207 of the teachers indicated that they graduated from Social Studies department of education faculty, and 70 of them indicated that they graduated from History and Geography departments of Faculty of Science and Literature. 162 teachers have 1-5 years, 76 teachers have 6-10 years, 22 teachers have 11-15 years and 17 teachers have 16 years and above professional seniority. All of the participants stated that they teach social studies at 6^{th} grades, 231 of them teach social studies at 7^{th} grades and 240 of them teach History of Turkish Revolution at 8^{th} grades. 159 teachers stated that their class size is between 30-39, 53 teachers stated their average class size below 30, 65 stated that their average class size is above 40.

Instruments

Reflective Thinking Tendency Determination Scale (YANDE) generated by Semerci (2007) and Personal data form was used to collect research data. Total scale consists of 35 items, 20 of them are negative 15 of them are positive (7 items for continuously and intentional thinking, 6 items for open-minded, 5 items for inquiry and effective teaching, 5 items for teaching responsibility and scientific, 6 items for researcher, 4 items for foresighted and friendly, 7 items for view of profession). In this scale one can get minimum 35 and maximum 175 points. Rating of the scale consists of, definitely agree (5), frequently agree (4), partially agree (3), frequently disagree (2) and definitely disagree (1). Cronbach Alfa internal consistency coefficient of the scale is 0.90. On the basis of its sub-scales reliability coefficients of the scale are for the first sub-scale .79, for second sub-scale .71, for third sub-scale .74, for fourth sub-scale .77, for fifth sub scale .74, for sixth sub-scale .66 and for seventh sub-scale .35. Personal data form, developed by researcher to get information about socio-demographic features of the teachers in the working group, consists of six questions about their gender, seniority, graduation faculty and department, work place, grade of the class, and class size.

Data Collection

In order to collect the raw data a written permission was taken from Sanliurfa Regional Directorate of Education. Data collection tools were applied during the visits in the schools by researcher between March and April 2010.

Data Analysis

SPSS-Windows 13.0 package software was used to analyze research data and in all the analysis, significance was considered to be 0.5. In order to determine the school living quality perception level of the teachers, standard deviation and arithmetic means of their YANDE points were calculated, these arithmetic means are commented from 1.00 to 1.80 period as “definitely disagree”, from 1.81 to 2.60 period as “too low”, from 2.61 to 3.40 period as “medium”, from 3.41 to 4.20 period as “frequently agree or high” and from 4.21 to 5.00 period as “definitely agree or very high”. One way variance analysis (ANOVA) and independent groups t test were applied in order to examine if there are significant differences in teacher’s reflective thinking level in terms of variables that are handled in the research. As a result of the ANOVA analysis between the groups, whose F values are found to be significant, LSD

multiple comparison test was used when variances were homogeneous. Furthermore before applying one way variance analysis, Levene test was applied to control homogeneity of the variances. Kruskall-Wallis test was employed when variances were not homogenous, Mann Whitney U test was applied on binary combination of groups to determine direction of significant difference observed between the groups on whom the test were applied.

FINDINGS

In this section findings related to differentiation in terms of socio-demographic variables, which is a subject of social studies teachers' reflective thinking level, were given in the tables.

Findings about Social Studies Teachers' Reflecting Thinking Level

Table 1 shows distribution of arithmetic mean and standard deviation of the total point obtained by the participant teachers from YANDE scale.

Table 1. Arithmetic Mean and Standard Deviation Values of Social Studies Teacher's (N=277) YANDE Scale Points.

Dimensions of YANDE Scale	Minimum and Maximum Point	$\overline{X}$	std.dev.
Continuously and intentional thinking	7–35	29.59	3.59
Open-minded	6–30	27.92	2.66
Inquiry and effective teaching	5–25	23.09	2.27
Teaching responsibility and scientific	5–25	21.71	2.67
Researcher	6–30	26.08	3.22
Foresighted and friendly	4–20	17.52	2.38
View of profession	2–10	8.74	1.60
YANDE Total Points	35–175	158.53	13.96

When values on table 1 are examined it can be seen that social studies teachers have an average over 4 in terms of YANDE Scale and Sub-scales. According to this scale teachers generally specified as "frequently agree"

Distribution of Social Studies Teachers' YANDE Scale Points According to Their Gender

Mann Whitney U-test results made to examine if YANDE Scale points of the teachers vary according to their gender are shown in Table 2.

As it is shown on Table 2, female teachers' averages of sub-dimension total points and other sub-dimensions are higher than male teachers except for Open-minded sub-dimension. However, it is stated that the differences between teachers' points are not statistically significant ($.05<p$) according to gender.

Table 2. Mann Whitney U Test Results of Social Studies Teachers' YANDE Scale Points According to Their Gender

Dimensions of YANDE Scale	Group	N	Mean Rank	Total Rank	U	p
Continuously and intentional thinking	Female	60	144.38	8663.00	6187.000	.555
	Male	217	137.51	29840.00		
Open-minded	Female	60	133.04	7982.50	6152.500	.498
	Male	217	140.65	30520.50		
Inquiry and effective teaching	Female	60	152.03	9121.50	5728.500	.140
	Male	217	135.40	29381.50		
Teaching responsibility and scientific	Female	60	143.96	8637.50	6212.500	.584
	Male	217	137.63	29865.50		
Researcher	Female	60	150.39	9023.50	5826.500	.210
	Male	217	135.85	29479.50		
Foresighted and friendly	Female	60	147.81	8868.50	5981.500	.328
	Male	217	136.56	29634.50		
View of Profession	Female	60	155.04	9302.50	5547.500	.063
	Male	217	134.56	29200.50		
YANDE Total Points	Female	60	148.78	8927.00	5923.000	.285
	Male	217	136.29	29576.00		

Distribution of Social Studies Teachers' YANDE Scale Points According to their Seniority

Table 3 shows the participants teachers' results obtained from Kruskal Wallis Test made to examine the differentiation of their YANDE scale points according to seniority

When table 3 is examined it can be seen that teachers who have 11-15 years of professional seniority have highest reflective thinking tendency in terms of both total dimensions and sub dimensions. However it can be seen that differences are not statistically significant [χ^2 (2) = 2.265, 4.041, 3.884, 5.427, .523, .773, 2.062, 1.998, .05<.p]

Table 3. Kruskal Wallis Test Results of Social Studies Teachers' YANDE Scale Points According to Seniority

Dimensions of YANDE Scale	Seniority	N	Mean Rank.	df	χ^2	p
Continuously and intentional thinking	1–5 years	162	142.73	3	2.265	.519
	6–10 years	76	134.30			
	11–15 years	22	145.95			
	16 years +	17	115.47			
Open-minded	1–5 years	162	141.78	3	4.041	.257
	6–10 years	76	126.39			
	11–15 years	22	160.93			
	16 years +	17	140.50			
Inquiry and effective teaching	1–5 years	162	136.44	3	3.884	.274
	6–10 years	76	134.85			
	11–15 years	22	169.61			
	16 years +	17	142.38			
Teaching responsibility and scientific	1–5 years	162	135.79	3	5.427	.143
	6–10 years	76	148.63			
	11–15 years	22	155.52			
	16 years +	17	105.18			
Researcher	1–5 years	162	138.63	3	.523	.914
	6–10 years	76	137.80			
	11–15 years	22	150.05			
	16 years +	17	133.62			
Foresighted and friendly	1–5 years	162	137.68	3	.773	.856
	6–10 years	76	138.48			
	11–15 years	22	153.02			
	16 years +	17	135.74			
View of profession	1–5 years	162	140.39	3	2.062	.560
	6–10 years	76	141.09			
	11–15 years	22	141.23			
	16 years +	17	113.59			
YANDE Total Points	1–5 years	162	140.79	3	1.998	.573
	6–10 years	76	135.71			
	11–15 years	22	153.02			
	16 years +	17	118.50			

Distribution of Social Studies Teachers' YANDE Scale Points According to Their Graduation

Table 4 shows the participant teachers' results of Kruskal Wallis Test made to examine the differentiation of their YANDE scale points according to graduation.

Table 4. Kruskal Wallis Test Results of Social Studies Teachers' YANDE Scale Points According to Graduation

Dimensions of YANDE Scale	Group	N	Mean Rank	Total Rank	U	p
Continuously and intentional thinking	Field	207	139.05	28782.50	7235.500	.987
	Other	70	138.86	9720.50		
Open-minded	Field	207	140.62	29108.50	6909.500	.547
	Other	70	134.21	9394.50		
Inquiry and effective teaching	Field	207	137.35	28431.00	6903.000	.541
	Other	70	143.89	10072.00		
Teaching responsibility and scientific	Field	207	137.28	28416.50	6888.500	.535
	Other	70	144.09	10086.50		
Researcher	Field	207	135.90	28131.50	6603.500	.265
	Other	70	148.16	10371.50		
Foresighted and friendly	Field	207	132.81	27491.50	5963.500	.025*
	Other	70	157.31	11011.50		
View of profession	Field	207	138.73	28718.00	7190.000	.920
	Other	70	139.79	9785.00		
YANDE Total Points	Field	207	138.10	28587.00	7059.000	.748
	Other	70	141.66	9916.00		

As it is shown in Table 4, in terms of total scale score and sub dimensions averages of social teachers graduated from other faculties and departments are higher except for "continuously and intentional thinking" and "Open-minded" dimensions. However it is stated that these observed differences are significant only in "Foresighted and friendly" sub dimensions ($p < .05$).

Distribution of Social Studies Teachers' YANDE Scale Points According to Their Work Place

Table 5 shows results of one way ANOVA analysis made to examine if there is significant difference between teachers YANDE scale points and their work place.

When table 5 is examined it can be seen that teachers' highest ratings for "Continuously and intentional thinking", "Open-minded", "Inquiry and Effective Teaching" sub dimensions and scale total points belong to teachers that work in villages, lowest ratings belong to teachers that work in city centers. However it is stated that there is no significant difference between teachers' YANDE points and their working place ($.05 < p$).

Table 5. One way ANOVA Results of Social Studies Teachers' (N=277) YANDE Scale Points According to Their Working Place

Dimensions of YANDE Scale	Work Place	N	$\overline{X}$	std.dev.	F	p
Continuously and intentional thinking	Village	87	29.68	4.00	.297	.744
	District	85	29.75	3.12		
	City Center	105	29.38	3.61		
	Total	277	29.59	3.59		
Open-minded	Village	87	28.12	2.59	.904	.406
	District	85	28.04	2.62		
	City Center	105	27.64	2.76		
	Total	277	27.92	2.66		
Inquiry and effective teaching	Village	87	23.29	2.44	.808	.447
	District	85	22.85	2.23		
	City Center	105	23.10	2.16		
	Total	277	23.09	2.27		
Teaching responsibility and scientific	Village	87	21.72	2.94	.535	.586
	District	85	21.48	2.62		
	City Center	105	21.88	2.47		
	Total	277	21.71	2.67		
Researcher	Village	87	25.98	3.79	.559	.572
	District	85	25.87	2.84		
	City Center	105	26.34	3.01		
	Total	277	26.08	3.22		
Foresighted and friendly	Village	87	17.58	2.59	.192	.825
	District	85	17.60	2.05		
	City Center	105	17.40	2.47		
	Total	277	17.52	2.38		
View of profession	Village	87	8.70	1.67	.295	.745
	District	85	8.85	1.63		
	City Center	105	8.69	1.52		
	Total	277	8.74	1.60		
YANDE Total Points	Village	87	159.11	15.66	.123	.884
	District	85	158.47	13.13		
	City Center	105	158.11	13.21		
	Total	277	158.53	13.96		

Distribution of Social Studies Teachers YANDE Scale Points According to Class Size

Table 6 shows the participant teachers' results for one way ANOVA Tests made to examine the differentiation of their YANDE scale points according to class size.

Table 6. One way ANOVA Results of Social Studies Teachers' (N=277) YANDE Scale Points According to Their Class Size

Dimensions of YANDE Scale	Class Size	N	$\overline{X}$	std.dev.	F	p	LSD
Continuously and intentional thinking	21–29 Students	53	28.64	3.78	3.442	0.33*	31-39 st.> 21–29 st.
	30–39 Students	159	30.04	3.59			
	40 and more	65	29.26	3.29			
	Total	277	29.59	3.59			
Open-minded	21–29 students	53	27.35	2.72	1.663	.191	
	30–39 students	159	28.12	2.64			
	40 and more	65	27.87	2.64			
	Total	277	27.92	2.66			
Inquiry and effective teaching	21–29 students	53	22.83	2.06	1.630	.198	
	30–39 students	159	23.30	2.34			
	40 and more	65	22.78	2.22			
	Total	277	23.09	2.27			
Teaching responsibility and scientific	21–29 students	53	21.32	2.89	1.599	.204	
	30–39 students	159	21.95	2.63			
	40 and more	65	21.43	2.54			
	Total	277	21.71	2.67			
Researcher	21–29 students	53	25.39	3.61	2.541	.081	
	30–39 students	159	26.44	2.96			
	40 and more	65	25.76	3.42			
	Total	277	26.08	3.22			
Foresighted and friendly	21–29 students	53	16.88	2.78	2.623	.074	
	30–39 students	159	17.74	2.12			
	40 and more	65	17.49	2.58			
	Total	277	17.52	2.38			
View of profession	21–29 students	53	8.90	1.74	.352	.703	
	30–39 students	159	8.69	1.53			
	40 and more	65	8.75	1.65			
	Total	277	8.74	1.60			
YANDE total points	21–29 students	53	155.05	14.08	3.152	.044*	31-39 st.> 21–29 st.
	30–39 students	159	160.23	13.62			
	40 and more	65	157.23	14.22			
	Total	277	158.53	13.96			

When table 6 is examined it is stated that, except for "view of profession" sub dimensions , in terms of other sub- dimensions and YANDE scale total points the highest average belongs to the teachers that have 30-39 students in their classrooms. However it is stated that these differences are significant in "Continuously and intentional thinking" sub-dimension and YANDE scale total points ($p < .05$). As a result of the LSD test made to determine which groups are the source of significant difference it is seen that significant differences are between teachers that have 21-29 students and teachers that have 31-39 students in favor of teachers that

have 31-39 students. Differences between other groups are not found to be statistically significant (.05<p).

DISCUSSION, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

At the end of the study it was found that reflective thinking level of social studies teachers was very high (4.52), their most positive perception related to their reflective thinking tendencies was in Open-minded dimension. If related literature is examined it can be seen that similar results were obtained in the researches that examine reflective thinking level of teachers who work different educational levels (Dolapçıoğlu, 2007; Kaf Hasırcı & Sadık, 2009; Meral, 2006). In this case it can be said that participant teachers are tended to revise all of the schools' elements to evaluate teaching and students' better training by both reflecting in action and on action about students' interaction and researching about pre-action plan and teaching processes. The reason of teachers' most positive perception being Open-minded is because this dimension may probably contain negative behaviors like: "I do not revise teaching achievements (target behaviors), I am not open to questions, reactions, and proposals related to teaching practices, I do not look at events from different perspectives in teaching-learning process, I do not give importance to educational activities of my students, I am not responsible for my students' emotional (affective) behaviors". According to Kağıtçıbaşı (1999, p.42) people's tendency to be favored socially makes it harder to evaluate themselves objectively. In other words the reason for teachers' high points from this sub-scale may be their tendency to be favored socially. Besides it can be said that the source of this result may be the structure of the curriculum given the Curriculum being implemented in accordance with the guide books prepared by the Ministry of Education since 2005 and programs caring about not only cognitive behaviors but also psychomotor and affective behaviors with collaborative activities directed to activate students.

The findings showed that female teachers have higher reflective thinking levels and more positive professional perceptions in Inquiry and effective teaching, teaching responsibility and scientific, researcher, foresighted and friendly dimensions. When similar researches on in service teachers are examined, it can also be seen from findings that female teachers have higher open-minded (Kaf Hasırcı & Sadık, 2009; Kılınç, 2010), more positive professional perceptions (Kılınç, 2010), higher job satisfaction (İnce, 2006) and better reflective thinking abilities than male teachers (Aslan, 2009; Özcan, 2002). Since Dolapçığolu's work (2007) determined that female teachers have higher levels reflective thinking about changes that can be made in lessons, taking students learning levels into account, creating diversity in education, it forces us to think that these results are related to choice of profession. The findings that show women behave more idealistic in choosing their job (Övet, 2006) and are more open to student responses about teaching practices support this opinion (Myhill, 2002; Palambo, 2001; Younger, 2000, cited in Özyurt, 2006, p.324).

As a result of the research it is stated that there is no significant difference between social studies teachers' seniority, work place and their reflecting levels. The teaching profession is first of all a humanitarian profession (Uçan, 2001). In this respect regardless of workplace and seniority, all teachers' reflective thinking toward being open-minded, taking care of students' expectations and requirements, bringing diversity to teaching process, renewing themselves, executing educational activities as planned, regulating participatory teaching environment, monitoring the development of students and cooperating with other teachers and managers (Balcı, 1996; Brophy, 1988; Cruichshank, Bainer & Metcalf, 1995), can be considered as a positive result. Although there is no significant difference having 11-15 years of professional teachers' relatively higher reflective thinking levels can be explained with their thinking skills

growing with their experience and sense of ownership over their profession. While Rodgers (2002) emphasized that as teachers get experienced they realize factors that affects learning and teaching more quickly, Taggart & Wilson (2005) indicated that experiences make teachers more competent in blending theory and practice. In the researches made by Dolapçıoğlu (2007) and Kılınç (2010) determining that teachers' reflective thinking levels are high in parallel to their working years, the importance of experience in reflective thinking can be seen as the supporter of this idea.

In this research it is determined that teachers graduated from the faculties and departments outside the area have significantly higher reflective thinking levels in foresighted and friendly dimension. This dimension of the scale is generally includes statements related to the teaching-learning process (helping students see the future, exchanging of ideas related to teaching with other teachers, utilization other teachers' positive constructive criticism.). Social studies is a subject in which taught knowledge needed to be internalized and turned into behavior , and it needs to be taught with a universal educational approach due to its structure that contains basic information, skills, values, attitudes about social life (MEB, 2005). According to descriptions of National Council of Social Studies (NCSS, 2004) teachers should address the subject deeply, by considering ethical dimensions of the subject they should make knowledge significant for the student and integrate it in practice. In this case it can be said that teachers who do not have pre-service education related to social studies and special teaching methods need to think more carefully and systematically in pre-action (planning the teaching), in-action (implementing) and after action (evaluating) to be able to teach by developing students' researching, applying, decision-making skills and their social values (Dorow, 1989, p. 2-4). Although there is no statistically significant difference in other dimensions of reflective thinking, as a supporter of this idea, teachers who graduated from other departments have higher levels.

At the end of the study it is seen that in terms of both "Continuously and intentional thinking" sub dimension and total scale score, teachers that have 30-39 class size have highest reflective thinking level, and it is stated that as class size decreases teachers perception of profession changes in a positive way. These two findings can be explained with "as class size increases, teaching and managing gets more difficult." According to Lee (2005, p.700) teachers generally start reflective thinking process when they encounter a problem in their classrooms and this process requires teachers to realize what's happening in the class, get information about the problem(s), to create alternative ways of solution and act by choosing the most logical of them (Moallem, 1997). Therefore as class size increases it gets harder for teachers to plan, implement and evaluate teaching by considering the circumstances in accordance with students' interests, abilities, needs (Brophy, 1988; Doyle, 1986; Edwards, 1993), chaos appears more often (Gottfredson, 1986; Sadık, 2006; Supaporn, 2000;) and class management gets more difficult. In this condition it can be said that in crowded classrooms teachers' encountering the situations that needs them to reflect more often develops their reflective thinking skills, on the other hand it causes them to get tired mentally. As a result of this teachers perception of profession decreases. The findings (Glickman & Tamashiro, 1980; Lewis, 1999; McNmara & Moreton, 1995) showing teachers of crowded schools spend more time for instructional and managerial problems, feel themselves inadequate and live stress are parallel to this idea.

In this research no application was made to improve teachers' reflective thinking skills, YANDE scale was applied to examine the existing situation. At the end of the study it can be seen that social studies teachers have very high reflective thinking tendencies and there is no significant difference in their reflective thinking levels according to their gender, seniority,

workplace variables. It is stated that teachers graduated other departments are more proactive and sincere; 11-15 years of professional teachers have relatively higher reflective thinking levels. It is also stated as class size increase teachers' continuously and intentional thinking tendency increases significantly but their perception of profession decreases. Since there are only limited researches related to in-service teachers' reflective thinking skills yet, similar researches with different sample groups on social studies teachers or with other branch teachers can be made. Getting results that show the importance of experience in reflective thinking shows teacher candidates need to be prepared for the profession with enough knowledge and maximum possible practice. In this respect atmosphere can be prepared for pre-service teachers to reflect on practices, exchange their experiences and reach higher capacity by doing regular evaluation meeting after micro training practices, school observations, their internship practices. Inexperienced teachers can be provided to observe experienced teachers' classroom so that they can learn their possible future school and class environments better, and they examine deeply how to reflect. Research on students can be planned in order to examine the effect of social studies lesson, whose purpose is to improve the skills of reaching and processing the information, on reflective thinking skills

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