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8th Grade Students' Positioning Skills on the Map

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ABSTRACT

Purpose: Events that occur around the world may cause a global impact in a short time. Therefore, it is important to not only understand the underlying causes and analyze their relationship but also know the location where they arise. This study investigated whether eighth-grade students have the ability to position Turkey and the neighboring countries on the map.

Method: This study was designed on a descriptive scanning method basis. In this study, 206 students in the eighth grade of three private and three public schools comprised the study sample. A question form developed by the researcher was used to collect the data.

Findings/Results: The findings obtained in this study showed that the eighth-grade students had positioning skills on the map at a low level. It was determined that some of the students participating in this study could not locate the country they live in on the map. It was found that the least known country was the location of Armenia on the map. One of the striking results that emerged in this study was that most of the students participating could not locate the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus and Azerbaijan, which have intense commercial, social, cultural and political relations with Turkey.

Implications for Research and Practice: In this study, the geolocating skills of the male students, the students educated in the public schools, the students whose parents got higher education levels, whose family had higher monthly income, and the students with atlas were higher. To develop the positioning skills of students, maps should be used frequently in social sciences and the Turkish Republic Revolution History and Kemalism courses. Maps in interactive boards can be used effectively. Students can be assigned to draw maps as homework. The number of activities related to maps in textbooks can be increased.

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Introduction

The human aspiration to explore and be acquainted with the surrounding constitutes the starting point of geographical information. It is possible to make various generalizations regarding social life and culture using geographical information and experience obtained throughout life (Sagay, 2007). Human beings can benefit the environment as much as they recognize it. Geography, which helps us to recognize the earth better, has a crucial role in our understanding of the world's culture more comprehensibly regarding the resolution of problems in our environment and allows us to look at the changing world from different aspects (Efe 1997; Maxim, 1999). Learning about geography is significant for both individuals and nations. Thus, geography should be taught to students as of early ages (Unlu, 2001). With the beginning of the educational life, the geographic information, which has been laid with the teaching of ground-direction concepts at primary school, continues in the following years with the changes in the course contents and the development periods of the students. In the secondary school 5th, 6th and 7th grades, the students have a broader understanding of the geographical phenomena from a close perspective to the world. All pupils who reach the elementary school period have to know, perceive their environment and know where they belong. Students learn about these in social studies class and in social sciences in their primary education (Sonmez, 2010). Students become able to question geographic events through the geography class, which is among the important disciplines that constitute the main backbone of the social studies course that constitutes a unique study area by filtering various branches of science in social sciences. Geographical information is necessary for acquiring patriotism, strengthening citizenship bonds and position finding, comparing countries, having knowledge about world problems, comprehending events with new formations in the world, even war (Turoglu, 2003; Guner, 2007; Ozturk & Alkis, 2009).

All courses include materials that help teachers and students. The main material of the social studies course is the maps. Tables, graphs, and maps summarize information that can be provided as longer expressions in a shorter and clearer way (Koc, 2008). Maps are also important data and image transfer tools (Lobben, 2004). Children's tendency to discover and perceive develops thanks to the maps (Ozturk & Dilek, 2002). Nature and people are in constant interaction. To be able to make enough use of nature, make the right moves where necessary and create plans for the future in this direction is realized by reading the maps well (Kartal, 2016). People should know the location of the geography-based events so that they can understand the relationships between events and their results (Tuna, Demirci & Gultekin, 2012). An individual should develop map skills to calculate location, natural and human characteristics, and the distance of any place to another (Unlu, 2011). Regarding the map skills, there are various classifications in the literature, although they have basically common points. The Ministry of National Education classified map skills as positioning, transferring information to map, selecting an appropriate map, making calculation by use of map, perceiving spatial distribution, interpreting the map accurately, creating a draft map (MEB, 2005). Mcclure (1992), categorized map skills as understanding and interpreting symbols on the map, profiling, direction finding, calculating distance and space,

measuring inclinations, positioning, using a scale, creating a map draft, defining physical characteristics, reading and interpreting the map. Weeden (1997), classified map skills under four categories; using a map, drawing a map, reading and interpreting a map.

The acquisitions on the map subject in the fourth grade of primary school and fifth, sixth, and seventh grades of the secondary school are provided in the social studies program. In many studies about map skills, it was seen that the competency levels of these skills and the problems experienced in gaining map skills were determined. If these studies are to be mentioned, Chiodo (1993), tried to examine the preservice teachers' map literacy levels with a map drawing activity. In another study, Chiodo (1997), tried to measure the place of the map in geography education with an experimental study. In the study, the effect of mind maps on learning geographical details was examined. Demiralp (2008), investigated the place of using a map and sphere and the place of geographical skills in geography training. Demirkaya (2009), tried to determine the geography literacy levels of university students; Gunes (2016), investigated social studies teacher candidates' skills in using map and map symbols in geography. Incekara and Kanturk (2010), examined social studies teacher candidates' map perceptions, map usage, and their opinions about maps. Kartal and Koc (2017), investigated the map literacy levels of secondary education students. Kizilcaoglu (2007), mentioned about some activities to improve students' map skills. Sonmez (2010), investigated map skills in teaching social sciences. Tuncel (2002), tried to identify the skills of locating Islamic countries on students' mind maps. Uzumcu (2007), investigated the effect of map reading skills on the success of sixth-grade students in the social sciences course through the activities prepared with active learning methods. Kuscu (2011), investigated the secondary school students' skills of positioning and coordinating. Akkus and Kuzey (2012), examined 8th-grade students' having map and location skills and their ability to relate these skills to real life.

The aim of the study is to find out the position finding skills level of eighth-grade students regarding Turkey and its neighbors. Answers to the following questions were sought.

1. Does the position finding skills level of eighth-grade students regarding Turkey and its neighbors differ by gender?
2. Does the position finding skills level of eighth-grade students regarding Turkey and its neighbors differ by school type?
3. Does the position finding skills level of eighth-grade students regarding Turkey and its neighbors differ by mothers' education levels?
4. Does the position finding skills level of eighth-grade students regarding Turkey and its neighbors differ by fathers' education levels?
5. Does position finding skills level of eighth-grade students regarding Turkey and its neighbors differ by possessing an atlas?

6. Does the position finding skills level of eighth-grade students regarding Turkey and its neighbors differ by family's income level?

Method

Research Design

This is a descriptive survey method-based study. The descriptive scanning method was used as this study investigated eighth-grade students' skills in positioning Turkey and the neighboring countries. The descriptive survey method is appropriate for the studies aiming to describe an existing situation as is (Karasar, 1999).

Population and Sample/ Study Group/Participants

The sample of this study consisted of eighth-grade students in Adiyaman province of Turkey in the 2018-2019 academic year. The sample consisted of eighth-grade 206 students enrolled in three private and three public schools in Adiyaman city center (Table 1). The schools were selected based on non-random purposive sampling criterion. The eighth-grade students were included in this study as they were believed to have all information provided about geography in social sciences and the skills that might be related to positioning on the map.

Table 1

Demographical Information of the Students

Gender	***f***	***%***
Female	99	48.05
Male	107	51.95
Total	206	100

As indicated in Table 1 above, of the participants, 51.95% were male, and 48.05% were female students. Of the students, 105 were entitled in public schools and 101 were entitled in private schools. Those schools were determined based on the information obtained from the Adiyaman Provincial Directorate of National Education. The reason that both private and public schools were included in the study is to determine whether the family's socio-economic level and parents' education levels have an effect on students' positioning on map skills.

Data Collection Tools

A question form, which was developed by the researcher and consisted of 13 questions regarding Turkey and its neighbors (Balkans, Middle East and Caucasus countries), was used. A detailed survey was carried out on the topic before the questions were prepared. The acquisitions from the social sciences curriculum regarding the research topic were examined. The secondary school fifth, sixth and seventh-grade geography-related course books were examined. Geographical skills that are included in the curriculum were considered while preparing the question form. Among these skills, map literacy and position analysis skills were prioritized.

To ensure the validity and reliability of the questionnaire, opinions of two social sciences teachers working in Adiyaman were taken and then, submitted to the opinion of one lecturer at Adiyaman University and one lecturer in Siirt University. A pilot study was conducted in a classroom of eighth-grade 36 students. Two questions were removed from the form based on the results. A problem was detected in one of the removed questions, so another question was prepared. In the other removed one, a new question was prepared to correct confusion caused by the map, and the form was finalized.

Data Collection

This study was conducted in the first half of the 2018-2019 academic year in January, which was approved by the school administrators and teachers. The students were given 40 minutes to refill their personal information and answer the questions.

Data Analysis

The data were analyzed descriptively by carrying out an analysis of answers given to each question by the students. Descriptive survey models are widely used in most of the quantitative studies regarding the education field (Cohen & Manion, 2007). Descriptive studies are generally used to illuminate a given situation, carry out an evaluation in accordance with the standards, and show possible relationships between events (Cepni, 2005). In this study, the students who answered correctly and incorrectly in the descriptive analysis were determined and the obtained data were interpreted by giving frequency and percentile values. Subsequently, all answers provided by the students were analyzed and the results were given in tables. Each question was evaluated on a score of 7.70 and the maximum score was 100. The students who scored between 0 and 33 were deemed as low level, between 34 and 67 were medium level, and between 68 and 100 were high level. Finally, the students' mean scores were calculated, and their levels were determined.

Findings

Table 2 shows the answers given by the students for the questions regarding positioning on the map.

Table 2

Answers Given by the Students for the Questions Regarding Positioning Countries on the Map

Question	***f***	**%**
1	119	57,76
2	121	58.73
3	8	3.88
4	68	33.00
5	177	85.92

Table 2 Continue

Question	*f*	*%*
6	32	15.53
7	48	23.30
8	71	34.46
9	73	35.43
10	21	10.19
11	57	27.66
12	54	26.21
13	32	15.53

In the first question, the students were asked to show on the map Syria which has enormously immigrated to Turkey in recent years. This question was correctly answered by 119 students (57.76%). In the second question, they were asked to show on the map Turkish Cypriot State (Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus) that is called as foster land of Turkey. This question was correctly answered by 121 students (58.73%). In the third question, they were asked to show on the map Armenia with which Turkey has very poor political, economic, and cultural relationships. Of them, only 8 students (3.88%) answered the question correctly. In the fourth question, they were asked to show on the map Greece, where Mustafa Kemal Ataturk was born, and which was dominated by Ottoman Empire for long periods, and has a border with Turkey with a river, called as Evros River. Of them, 68 students (33%) answered the question correctly. In the fifth question, they were asked to show Turkey on the map. Of them, 177 students (85.92%) answered this question correctly. In the sixth question, they were asked to show on the map Azerbaijan whose population is almost all Muslims, which is called as two states but one nation along with Turkey and has a critical potential of petroleum. This question was correctly answered by 32 students (15.53%). In the seventh question, they were asked to show on the map İran, which has important petroleum and natural gas sources, whose mother language is Persian and capital is Teheran. This question was correctly answered by 48 students (23.30%). In the eighth question, they were asked to imagine they were given the task to draw the petroleum pipelines that will be set up in Turkey over the Mediterranean as of Egypt and to show on the map Egypt which is the starting point of this project. This question was correctly answered by 71 students (34.46%). In the eighth question, they were asked to show on the map of Saudi Arabia if the family elders should want them to point the country to go on pilgrimage. Of them, 73 students (35.43%) answered this question correctly. In the tenth question, they were asked to show on the map Palestine, where locates Jerusalem, hosting the first Qibla of İslam and deemed sacred to Muslims, Christians and Jews. Of them, 21 students (10.19%) answered this question correctly. In the eleventh question, they were asked to show on the map Iraq where

Kut Al Amara victory took place, the Turkish population is dense in its Mosul and Kirkuk cities, and which is rich by petroleum. Of them, 57 students (27.66%) answered this question correctly. In the twelfth question, they were asked to show on the map Bulgaria, an important Balkan country, whose capital is Sofia, and was a Turkish territory during the Ottoman Empire. Of them, 54 students (26.21%) answered this question correctly. In the thirteenth question, they were asked to show on the map Georgia, located on the Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan (BTC) petroleum pipeline, a neighboring country of Turkey, and whose population is Christian mostly. This question was correctly answered by 32 students (15.53%). It can be said that most students do not know Turkey's neighboring countries and the ones in close relationship with Turkey.

Table 3 shows the mean scores of the students on positioning Turkey and the neighboring countries on the map.

Table 3

Locating Turkey and Nearby Countries on the Map Average Skill Points of Students

Level	***f***	***%***
Low	133	64.56
Medium	51	24.75
High	22	10.67

Of the students, 64.56% had a score between 0 and 33, 24.75% had a score between 34 and 67, 10.67% had a score between 68 and 100. More than half of the students had a low mean score, which indicated that eighth-grade students' positioning on the map skills were at a low level.

Table 4 shows the mean scores of the students regarding their school type.

Table 4

Students' Mean Scores based on School Type

School Type	***Average Score***
State Schools	38.12
Private Schools	34.60

The average number of the students in public schools (38.12), was found to be higher than that of the private school students (34.60), considering the effects of the school type on students' positioning skills. It is expected that the students getting educated in the private schools should have higher average scores considering that the possibilities that a private school provides are more than those that a state school can provide. However, the obtained findings show that the students getting educated in state schools have high-level skills than those getting in private schools in terms of the skill of locating countries on the map.

Table 5 shows the mean scores of the students regarding their gender.

Table 5

Score Averages of the Students based on Gender

Gender	Average Score
Female	23.26
Male	24.03
Average of all students	23.66

Considering students' positioning skills based on gender, it is clear that male students have a higher mean score (24.03), than that of female students (23.26). The slight difference between students' mean points shows that gender has not a significant effect on positioning skills.

Table 6 shows the mean scores of the students regarding their mothers' education level.

Table 6

Students' Mean Scores based on their Mothers' Education Levels

Education Level	*f*	*%*	*Average Score*
İlliterate	10	4.85	25.40
Primary School	37	17.96	29.54
Secondary School	23	11.16	21.42
High School	69	33.49	31.80
Undergraduate	65	31.55	37.66
Postgraduate	2	0.97	69.25
Total	206	100	

The positioning skills mean scores of the students whose mothers had a master's degree (69.25) were higher than the students whose mothers were not literate (25.40), are primary school graduates (29.54), were secondary school graduates (21.42), were high school graduates (31.80), and had a bachelor's degree (37.66). Map skills of students increased as the education level of the mother increased. Higher mean scores of secondary and above school graduate mothers are indicators that they can help their children in academic works more than mothers who are graduates of primary school.

Table 7 shows the mean scores of the students regarding their fathers' education level.

Table 7

Students' Mean Score based on their Fathers' Education Levels

Education Level	***f***	***%***	***Average Score***
Illiterate	-	-	-
Primary School	18	8.73	17.92
Secondary School	28	13.59	24.19
High School	57	27.66	28.76
Undergraduate	102	49.51	39.32
Postgraduate	1	0.48	38.50
Total	206	100	

Positioning on the map skills scores of the students whose fathers had a bachelor's degree (39.32) or master's degrees (38.50) were higher than those who were primary school graduates (17.92), secondary school graduates (24.19), and high school graduates (28.76). The increase in students' positioning on the map skills scores as fathers' education levels increase was an indicator of the effect of fathers' education levels on their children.

Table 8 shows the mean scores of the students regarding their family income level.

Table 8

Level of Income of the Students' Parents

Level of Income	***f***	***%***	***Average Score***
1000-1999	7	3.39	17.60
2000 - 2999	38	18.44	17.22
3000 - 3999	35	16.99	23.10
4000 - 4999	26	12.62	31.06
5000 - 5999	13	6.31	39.64
6000 and above	87	42.23	42.04
Total	206	100	

The study findings indicated that the positioning skills of the students with a family income level of 6000 TRY and above were higher than those with a lower income level. The socio-economic status of the family can provide a positive effect on the increase in the academic achievement of the student in the provision of ease of access to the information that the child wants outside of the school, and the ability of the family to meet the many needs of the material supply.

Table 9 shows the mean scores of the students regarding their ownership of an atlas.

Table 9

Not having an Atlas

Having Atlas (maps) or not	*f*	*%*	*Average Score*
Yes	167	81.06	35.54
No	39	18.93	26.65
Total	206	100	

The students who had an atlas obtained higher scores on positioning on the map skills (35.54) than those who did not have one (26.65). This finding indicated the importance of atlas in promoting students' map skills.

Discussion, Conclusion and Implications

In this study, the secondary school 8th-grade students' skills in locating Turkey and the surrounding countries on the map were examined. In this study, students' locating skill levels were examined in three categories. According to this, it was determined that 64.56% of the students were at a lower level, 24.75% at medium-level and 10.67% at a high level. The obtained results show that the 8th-grade students have the locating skills mostly at a lower level. The use of maps and spheres in geography and history classes of the social sciences facilitates establishing a spatial relationship with the subject (Demircioglu & Akengin, 2012). Considering that the most widely used material in social sciences and Turkish Republic Revolution History and Kemalism courses in the eighth grade is the map, the result of this study should be taken into consideration. It is important that individuals have map and direction skills to better understand the environment and the world they live in. Therefore, students should be trained as having basic map and direction skills. Students should be able to show their place of residence and other places at different points on a map (Altinbilek & Sanalan, 2005). In the literature, there are studies conducted on different groups that support the results of this study and reach different results. In their study in which the spatial skills of the sixth-grade students were examined, Ocal (2007), determined the mean scores of 70% of the students to correctly know the neighboring countries of Turkey is 5.5. The mean scores of the students to correctly locate these countries on the map is 4.2. Half of the students have a medium level of knowledge about positioning and one-third of them have top-level knowledge. Soydabircan (2011), determined that the mean score of the students on locating skills on the map was 55. Based on this result, the researcher stated that students' locating skills were at a medium level. Uker (2009), found that secondary school students' map positioning skills were medium level. Tas (2019), found that fifth-grade students had difficulty distinguishing maps. Kaya (2012), found out that students showed near places on the map more precisely than remote countries. In the study conducted by Ertugrul (2008), it was found out that 6th-grade students had medium level map using skills. Akkus and Kuzey (2012), found that 52.2% of secondary school students accurately show the latitude and longitude of a

desired location on the map. The researchers concluded that the students gained the locating and coordinating ability on the map and were successful in transferring these to real life. Akbas and Toros (2016), reported that most of the teacher candidates were not successful in correctly positioning continents and the countries located on these continents. Also, the teacher candidates made many mistakes showing continents and countries in their mind maps. Incekara and Kanturk (2010), found that social sciences teacher candidates had low skills in showing their districts on a blank map. The study conducted by Tuna, Demirci and Gultekin (2012), indicated that direction finding and positioning skills were very low in the public.

This study indicated that students were not well-skilled in positioning Turkey and the neighboring countries. Turkey was the country in which the 8th-grade students had the most success in locating countries. 85.92% of the students surveyed were able to locate Turkey in the right way in the blank map. It was determined in the study conducted by Tuna, Demirci and Gultekin (2012), related to geographical skills that 20% of the participants did not show the location of Turkey correctly on the blank map. Considering this result from different perspectives, there are students who cannot show the country they live in should be considered as a subject to be considered. Armenia was the country that the students surveyed had the least success in locating (3.88%). The minimum level of political, economic, cultural, and commercial relationships between Turkey and Armenia may have had an effect on this.

Another striking finding is that only 58.73% of the students can position the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus that is called foster land and enshrines in the heart of Turkey and the Turkish nation. The location of Azerbaijan, which has intense relations with Turkey and is known as "two states, one nation" is known by 15.53% of the students. 57.76% of the students know correctly the location of Syria from which Turkey has been allowing immigrants for the last seven years and which has been on the front burner of printed and visual media. 35.43% of the students know the location of Arabia correctly, where millions of Muslims make a pilgrimage every year. 33% of the students correctly show the location of Greece, 26.21% of them know the location of Bulgaria, 27.66 % Iraq, 23.30% Iran, 15.33% Georgia, 34.46 Egypt, 10.19% Palestine on the map. Besides that, nearly half of the students could not show on the map some countries, including Greece, Syria, and Azerbaijan that are Turkey's neighbors. In his study on mind maps of Turkish students, In the study conducted on mind map of Turkish students, Tuncel (2002), stated that it was negative for students not to remember the Turks living in the Western Thrace, and very few students could remember Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus. This finding was frightening considering geopolitical importance of these regions. The study conducted by Kaya (2012), on primary school students' positioning skills showed that their mean success rate in positioning both remote and close countries was 37.32%. Ertugrul (2008), found out that 15% of sixth grade students did not know any country neighboring Turkey. The number of students who answered almost all the questions was very low. The researchers determined that students have location knowledge of where they live but they do not have enough information about Turkey's location.

Factors, such as facilities offered by the school, the number of students in the class, diversity of materials used in the course as well as social capital of the school, effective leadership, effective teacher, occupational development and organizational commitment, may positively affect student success (Gokce & Kahraman, 2010). Hardware, equipment and physical properties of the school are important as regards the implementation of teaching programs (Alkan, Deryakulu & Simsek, 1995). Private schools can be advantageous with all these contributing aspects compared to public schools. The students enrolled in private schools were expected to have higher mean scores before the data were collected. However, the mean score of the students in public schools was 38.12, whereas the mean score of those in private schools was 34.60. This result shows that students' internal motivation has a significant role in their academic success. Social and economic opportunities of families make accessible any kind of supportive factors that may contribute to the success (Sarier, 2016). The quality of the private schools in Adiyaman, included in the sample of the study, may have had an effect in this result as it is among the last of 81 provinces of Turkey concerning the socio-economic situation. Comparing map skills of the students in private schools and public schools, some studies found that students in private schools had better results than those in public schools (Aksoy, Kilicoglu & Ablak, 2015; Sonmez, 2010, Ertugrul, 2008).

In this study, map locating skill scores of male students (24.03) was higher than female students (23.26). It can also be said that the difference is not very significant. From this result, it can be stated that gender has no distinct effect on the map positioning skills. Some studies indicated that female students had more positioning skills than males (Ocal, 2007), while other studies indicated vice versa (Koc, Aksoy & Cifci, 2017; Koc & Cifci, 2016; Kartal, 2016; Dikmenli, 2015; Merc, 2011). However, there are studies indicating that gender did not have a significant effect on students' map skills (Goksel, 2007; Ertugrul, 2008; Kartal & Koc, 2017). Boys always play different games than girls, and a variable that is seen as the biggest cause of gender differences in adult cognition is fun activities in early games (Baenninger & Newcombe, 1989).

In this study, it was found that education levels of students' parents affected their positioning skills. The mean scores of the students whose parents had a bachelor's and master's degree were higher than the students whose parents had lower education levels. These results suggest that parental education levels positively affect students' positioning on the map skills. In contrary to the findings, Kartal (2016), suggested there was no significant relationship between map literacy of ninth-grade students and their parents' education levels, but the students whose parents had different education levels had similar scores regarding map literacy rates. The results suggest that the increase in parents' education levels have a positive effect on students' understanding of symbols, navigating and directing, drawing a map in a place visited for the first time, drawing and recognizing land forms of their residential places, distance measuring skills, and fraction scale skills (Kuzey, 2016).

This study indicated that mean scores of the students with a family income level between 1000 and 5999 TRY were lower than those with a family income level of 6000 TRY and above. This result indicates that students' positioning skills increase as the

students' income level increases. Kuzey (2016), found that the increase in the family's economic income has a positive effect on the student's ability to read and interpret maps, to read location and landforms, to draw and read sketches and to identify and to know and determine the location and coordinate skills. In the study, which examines the effect of income level on the level of benefiting from educational opportunities, socio-economic levels of the families directly affect students' education environment (Onur 2013; Ciftci & Caglar, 2014). This study indicated that the mean scores of the students who had an atlas were higher than those who did not have one. The atlas should be used to have skills on positioning on the map, understanding symbols, determining a direction, distance measuring, and drawing a map. Textbooks should direct students to atlases for teaching certain concepts regarding maps (Girgin, Erturk, Sever & Guner, 2001).

Based on the results obtained from this study, the eighth-grade students could not achieve geographical skills provided in the social sciences program. Map, which is one of the main materials of social sciences, is not regarded as a fundamental reference resource by the students. The students in this study did not exactly learn basic map skills and direction skills. The students mostly could show the position of the country where they live, but they did not point exactly to the neighboring countries, which shows that they have problems with geographical knowledge. The school type has no vital role about geographical skills. Gender also has no vital role in position and direction finding and position skills. The effects of parents on their child's academic success are an undeniable fact. The results of this study also support this concept. Children of families who have a higher education level are more successful. Children of families with higher socio-economic levels obtained better results than others. The importance of atlas, which is one of the most important materials of geography lessons, has come into prominence. Mean scores of the students who had an atlas were higher than those who did not have one. There are some suggestions based on the findings of this study: Maps can be widely used in the social sciences and Turkish Republic Revolution History and Kemalism courses to develop the positioning skills of students. Teachers can encourage every student to have an atlas. Teachers can also give homework to students to draw a map to support their map skills.

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8. Sınıf Öğrencilerinin Haritada Konumlandırma Becerileri

Atıf:

Erol, H. (2020). 8th-grade students' positioning skills on the map. *Eurasian Journal of Educational Research 88,* 67-86. DOI: 10.14689/ejer.2020.88.3

Özet

İnsanın yasadığı dünyayı tanıma ve bilme isteği coğrafi bilginin başlangıç noktasını oluşturur. Öğrenim hayatının başlamasıyla birlikte ilkokulda yer-yön kavramlarının öğretilmesiyle temeli atılan coğrafi bilgiler ilerleyen yıllarda ders içeriklerine ve öğrencilerin gelişim dönemlerine göre değişim göstererek devam eder. Ortaokul 5., 6. ve 7. sınıfta yakın cevreden dünyaya doğru geniş bir bakış açısıyla öğrenciler coğrafi olayları anlama ve kavrama konusunda daha fazla bilgi sahibi olurlar. Tüm derslerde öğretmen ve öğrencilere yardımcı olan materyaller bulunur. Sosyal bilgiler dersinin ana materyallerinin basında haritalar gelmektedir. Haritalar önemli veri ve görüntü aktarma araçlarıdır (Lobben, 2004). Doğadan yeteri kadar yararlanabilmek, gerekli olan yerde doğru hamleleri yapabilmek yine bu doğrultuda geleceğe dair planlamalar oluşturabilmek haritaları iyi okuyabilmekle gerçekleşir (Kartal, 2016). İnsanoğlunun yeryüzünde meydana gelen coğrafi kaynaklı olayların birbirleriyle ilişkilerini ve ortaya çıkan sonuçlarını anlayabilmesi için bu olayların yeryüzündeki konumunu bilmeleri gerekmektedir (Tuna, Demirci & Gültekin, 2012). Bir yerin konumu, doğal ve beşeri özellikleri, bir yere olan uzaklığının hesaplanabilmesi için bireyde harita becerilerinin gelişmiş olması gereklidir (Unlu, 2011).

Araştırmanın Amacı: Literatürde harita becerileriyle ilgili yapılan çalışmalar incelendiğinde ortaokul öğrencilerinin haritada konum belirleme beceri düzeylerini inceleyen bir çalışmanın yapılmamış olmasından yola çıkılarak öğrencilerdeki bu becerinin var olan durumunu ortaya çıkarmak amacıyla bu çalışmanın yapılmasına karar verilmiştir. Yapılan bu çalışma ile 8. sınıf öğrencilerinin haritada "konum bulma" beceri düzeyleri ortaya çıkarılarak bir durum tespiti yapılmış olacaktır.

Yöntem: Bu çalışma, tarama modelinde betimsel bir araştırmadır. Bu çalışmada 8. sınıf öğrencilerinin haritada Türkiye ve yakın çevresini konumlandırma becerileri incelenmeye çalışıldığı için betimsel tarama modeli kullanılmıştır. Tarama modelleri varolan bir durumu olduğu sekliyle betimlemeyi amaçlayan çalışmalara uygun bir modeldir (Karasar, 1999).

Bulgular: Öğrencilerden 0-33 puan aralığına girenlerin oranı %64.56, 34-67 puan aralığına girenlerin oranı %24.75, 68-100 puan aralığına girenlerin oranın ise %10.67 olduğu tespit edilmiştir. Araştırmaya katılan öğrencilerin yarıdan fazlasının puan ortalamasının alt düzeyde olması 8. sınıf öğrencilerinin haritada konum belirleme beceri düzeylerinin alt düzeyde olduğunu göstermektedir. Öğrenim görülen okul turunun öğrencilerin haritada konum belirleme beceri düzeylerine etkisine bakıldığında devlet okullarında öğrenim gören öğrencilerin (38.12) ortalamasının özel

okullarda öğrenim gören öğrencilerden (34.60) daha yüksek olduğu görülmektedir. Araştırmadan elde edilen bulgular devlet okulunda öğrenim gören öğrencilerin haritada konumlandırma açısından daha üst düzey beceriye sahip olduklarını göstermektedir.

Cinsiyet değişkeninin öğrencilerin haritada konum belirleme beceri düzeylerine etkisine bakıldığında erkeklerin (24.03) puan ortalamasının kızlardan (23.26) daha yüksek olduğu görülmektedir. Öğrencilerin puan ortalamaları arasındaki farkın çok az olması cinsiyetin haritada konum belirleme konusunda belirleyici etkisinin olmadığını göstermektedir. Bu araştırmada öğrencilerin ebeveynlerinin eğitim düzeyinin onların haritada konumlandırma beceri düzeylerini etkilediği ortaya çıkmıştır. Araştırmaya katılan öğrencilerden anneleri ve babaları lisans ve lisansüstü eğitim alanların ortalama puanlarının anneleri ve babaları daha alt düzey eğitim almış olanlara göre daha yüksek olduğu ortaya çıkmıştır. Bu sonuçlar ebeveynlerin eğitim seviyesinin öğrencilerin haritada konum bulma beceri düzeylerini olumlu şekilde etkilediğini ortaya koymaktadır. Ailesinin aylık geliri 6000 lira ve üzeri olan öğrencilerin haritada konum belirleme beceri puanlarının araştırmaya katılan ve aylık geliri daha düşük olan diğer bütün öğrencilerden daha yüksek olduğu görülmüştür. Bu araştırmada atlası olan (35.54) öğrencilerin haritada konum belirleme beceri puanlarının atlası olmayan (26.65) öğrencilerden daha yüksek olduğu tespit edilmiştir. Araştırmadan elde edilen bu bulgu öğrencilerde harita becerilerinin geliştirilmesinde atlasın önemini göstermektedir.

Tartışma, Sonuç ve Öneriler: Araştırmada öğrencilerin konumlandırma beceri düzeyleri 3 kategoride incelenmiştir. Buna göre; öğrencilerin %64.56'si alt düzeyde, %24.75'i orta düzeyde, %10.67'sinin ise üst düzeyde konumlandırma becerisine sahip oldukları ortaya çıkmıştır. Elde edilen sonuçlar 8. sınıf öğrencilerinin büyük ölçüde alt düzeyde konumlandırma becerisine sahip olduklarını göstermektedir. Sosyal bilgiler dersinde ve 8. sınıf Türkiye Cumhuriyeti İnkılap Tarihi ve Atatürkçülük dersinde en fazla kullanılan materyalin harita olduğu düşünülürse sonucun bu şekilde çıkması üzerinde düşünülmesi gereken bir konu olarak göze çarpmaktadır. Bu araştırmada öğrencilerin Türkiye'nin komşuları ve yakın çevresindeki ülkeleri haritada konumlandırma açısından yeterli beceriye sahip olmadıkları ortaya çıkmıştır. 8. sınıf öğrencilerinin konum belirlemede en fazla başarılı oldukları ülke Türkiye olmuştur. Araştırmaya katılan öğrencilerin %85.92'si Türkiye'nin yerini dilsiz harita doğru bir şekilde gösterebilmişlerdir. Ortaya çıkan bu sonuç farklı açıdan değerlendirildiğinde yasadığı ülkeyi haritada gösteremeyen öğrencilerin olması üzerinde düşünülmesi gereken bir konu olarak değerlendirilmelidir. Araştırmaya katılan öğrencilerin Türkiye'nin komşuları arasında yerini en az bildikleri ülke Ermenistan (%3.88) olmuştur. Türkiye ile Ermenistan arasında siyasi, sosyal, kültürel ve ticari ilişkilerin uzun yıllardır minimum düzeyde olması sonucun bu şekilde çıkmasında etkili olmuş olabilir. Araştırmada ortaya çıkan bir diğer ilgi çekici sonuç ise Türkiye'nin ve Türk milletinin gönlünde ayrı bir yeri olan, "yavru vatan" olarak adlandırılan Kuzey Kıbrıs Türk Cumhuriyetinin konumunun öğrencilerin %58.73'u tarafından bilinmesidir. Türkiye ile çok yoğun ilişkiler içerisinde bulunan, "iki devlet bir millet" olarak bilinen Azerbaycan'ın yeri öğrencilerin %15.53'u tarafından bilinmiştir. Son 7 yıldır

Türkiye'nin yoğun göç aldığı, sürekli yazılı ve görsel medyanın gündeminde olan Suriye'nin yerini araştırmaya katılan öğrencilerin %57.76'si doğru bilmiştir. Her yıl milyonlarca müslümanın hac ibadetini yapmak için gittiği Arabistan'ın konumunu öğrencilerin %35.43'ü doğru bilmiştir. Araştırmaya katılan öğrencilerin %33'u Yunanistan'ı, %26.21'i Bulgaristan'ı, %27.66'si Irak'ı, %23.30'u İran'ı, %15.53'u Gürcistan'ı, %34.46'si, Mısır'ı, %10.19'u Filistin'inin yerini haritada doğru göstermiştir. Bu araştırmada veri toplama aşamasındaki beklenti özel okullarda öğrenim gören öğrencilerin ortalama puanlarının daha yüksek çıkacağı seklindeydi. Araştırmada devlet okullarında öğrenim gören öğrencilerin ortalaması (38.12) özel okullarda öğrenim gören öğrencilerin ortalamasından (34.60) yüksek çıkmıştır. Ortaya çıkan bu sonuç içsel motivasyonun öğrencilerin başarılarında belirleyici bir yerinin olduğunu göstermektedir. Araştırmanın örneklemini oluşturan Adıyaman şehir merkezindeki özel okulların niteliği, ayni zamanda şehrin sosyoekonomik açıdan Türkiye'de 81 il içinde son sıralarda olması bu sonucun ortaya çıkmasında etkili olmuş olabilir. Bu araştırmada erkek öğrencilerin (24.03) harita konumlandırma beceri puanları kadın öğrencilerden (23.26) yüksek çıkmıştır. Ortaya çıkan farkın çok fazla anlamlı olmadığı da söylenebilir. Bu sonuçtan hareketle cinsiyetin harita konumlandırma becerisinde belirgin bir etkiye sahip olmadığı ifade edilebilir. Bu araştırmada öğrencilerin ebeveynlerinin eğitim düzeyinin onların haritada konumlandırma beceri düzeylerini etkilediği ortaya çıkmıştır. Araştırmaya katılan öğrencilerden anneleri ve babaları lisans ve lisansüstü eğitim alan öğrencilerin ortalama puanlarının anneleri ve babaları daha alt düzey eğitim almış olanlara göre daha yüksek olduğu ortaya çıkmıştır. Bu sonuçlar ebeveynlerin eğitim seviyesinin öğrencilerin haritada konum bulma beceri düzeylerini olumlu şekilde etkilediğini ortaya koymaktadır. Araştırmaya katılan öğrencilerden ailesinin aylık geliri 1000 ile 5999 lira olan öğrencilerin ortalama puanın ailesinin gelir düzeyi 6000 lira ve üzeri olan öğrencilerden daha düşük olduğu ortaya çıkmıştır. Bu sonuç gelir düzeyi arttıkça öğrencinin konumlandırma beceri düzeyinin de aynı şekilde arttığını göstermektedir. Bu araştırmada atlası olan öğrencilerin ortalama puanı atlası sahibi olmayan öğrencilere göre daha yüksek çıkmıştır. Haritada konum bulma, sembolleri anlama, yön tayini yapma, mesafe hesaplanması ve harita çizimi gibi becerilerin kazandırılmasında atlaslardan yararlanılmalıdır. Araştırmadan elde edilen bulgulardan yola çıkılarak bazı öneriler geliştirilmiştir: Öğrencilerde konum becerisinin gelişmesi için sosyal bilgiler dersinde ve Türkiye Cumhuriyeti İnkılap Tarihi ve Atatürkçülük dersinde sık sık harita kullanılabilir. Her öğrencinin atlas sahibi olması konusunda öğretmenler teşvik edici olabilir. Öğrencilerin harita becerilerinin geliştirilmesi amacıyla harita çizme ödevleri verilebilir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Ortaokul, öğrenci, sosyal bilgiler, konum.