INVESTIGATING FOURTH GRADE PRIMARY SCHOOL STUDENTS' PERCEPTIONS ABOUT ACTIVE CITIZENSHIP THROUGH THEIR DRAWINGS[1]

Arş. Gör. Ceren ÇEVİK KANSU
Bayburt University, Education Faculty, Department of Elementary Education, Bayburt, Turkey,
cerencevik@bayburt.edu.tr

Yrd. Doç. Dr. Yücel ÖKSÜZ
Ondokuz Mayıs University, Education Faculty, Department of Elementary Education, Samsun, Turkey,
yoksuz@omu.edu.tr

ABSTRACT

There are some citizenship knowledge, skills and values that need to be hold by primary school 4th grade students. There are many methods or techniques for revealing active citizenship perception of students studying in this class. In this study, student drawings and explanation they have made regarding these drawings have been considered. The aim of this study is to determine the perceptions of 4th grade primary students about active citizenship through their drawings. This study was conducted in the spring semester of the 2012-2013 academic year. A total of 48 4th grade students attending primary school at Bayburt city in Turkey were observed. The interpretive content analysis method was used in the study and the study data were collected by means of draw-and-explain task. During data collection, the students drew pictures of active citizenship and explained their drawings. As a result of this study, the primary students' pictures mostly included humans, buildings like houses and schools, and nature items such as trees. In addition, it was observed that their drawings were grouped around environmental awareness, helpfulness, responsibility and patriotism. Pictures drawn by students showed that they were aware of examples of active citizenship behaviors in their environment. Research data were treated according to three themes determined in the content analysis: Environmental sensibility, cooperation and social responsibility. Although the students had studied different subjects related to active citizenship in the primary school curriculums, the pictures drawn by the students were limited to only one or two concepts. Primary school curriculums should include social skill education, character education and learning activities in order for students at younger ages to gain more active citizenship awareness. In future researches, how the gender, class level, parent education level, social and cultural differences affect the senses of the students regarding active citizenship can be investigated. Repeat of similar studies with different samplings and comparison of the results have been suggested.

Keywords: The 4th grade of primary student, active citizenship perception.

INTRODUCTION

Citizen, as its dictionary meaning, is used as a sense of "each one of them whose country or country feelings is one", and citizenship, on the other hand, is used as "being a citizen, state of growing up or living in the same country (TDK, 1998: 1647). Citizenship information is defined as a discipline branch, arranging mutual relationship of citizens in an organized society and containing citizenship rights and assignments and assignments and responsibilities of people for each other and the society (Duman, Yavuz and Karakaya, 2010: 13; Nomer, 1983: 3; Ciftci, 2008: 107). Humans, as a social being, have to answer requirements and expectation of the society they live in. Knowledge of social relationship in a minimum level, whose framework has been drawn with social organization and rules, will be an indication of a healthy individual and healthy society. In this context, citizenship includes the entirety of relationship between individuals, state and humans, and on the other hand, we can say that citizenship education is an education showing how and in what way these relationships need to be realized (Elkatmış, 2012).

Active citizenship, one of the targets of European Union policies, has been defined as social participation and participation in relational living by tolerance, non violence, according legal rules and human rights (De Weerd et.al, 2005).

According to Hoskins (2006), active citizenship is "being a citizenship candidate characterized as nonviolence in the framework of mutual respect, democracy and human rights accordance in civil society, community and/or political living". Active citizenship approves dependency of having general accuracy in the formation and rearrangement of democratic society in all individuals or groups in a democratic society. It is to have a tendency to own democratic applications within a society and the entirety of organizations; responsibility to reveal that it does not stay out of this group or individuality out of these applications and institutions; to have a broad politic development containing all structures and relationships in social arrangements.

There is no class called active citizenship education in 4th grades in the primary school. Human rights and citizenship is gained to students as an inner discipline in especially social studies class content. Raising of a human, as comfortable, peaceful and being aware of their rights and responsibilities in the society they live in as a social entity are listed among the purposes of citizenship education (Joslin, Pope and Lim, 2007; Piper & Garratt, 2004).

Although each step of education is vital, primary school has a distinct significance in terms of the populace it addresses. Primary school process, when the basic character and personality of the person's is formed, is a critical time period to have value, attitude and behavior gained to the individual (Bacanli, 2002; Oktay, 2007). Foundation stones of citizenship education are laid in primary school as well therefore primary school is regarded as an important fracture point in terms of citizenship education (Ersoy, 2007).

There are some citizenship knowledge, skills and values that need to be hold by primary school 4th grade students. There are many methods or techniques for revealing active citizenship perception of students studying in this class. In this study, student drawings and explanation they have made regarding these drawings have been considered. It is clear that children's drawings were used in Turkish literature in matters such as the image of scientists (Buldu, 2006; Oğuz, 2007; Turkmen, 2008), European Union perception (Belet and Turkkan, 2007), family perception (Turkkan, 2004), internet perception (Ersoy and Turkkan, 2009), environmental education (Barraza, 1999; Alerby, 2000; Fleer, 2002; Sadık et.al, 2011; Yardımcı and Kılıç, 2010; Ozsoy, 2012), violence perception manners (Yurtul and Artut, 2008), and it was observed that there is no study applying the analysis of children's drawings regarding citizenship education in the literature. Conducted studies show that there is need for studies intended the way the active citizenship is perceived and understood by children in this country. Therefore, this study was conducted to investigate the active citizenship perceptions of primary school students by means of their drawings. The results obtained from the study are valuable since they will contribute to fund of knowledge about the citizenship education and at the same time they will form an example for determining their thoughts on active citizenship.

METHOD

The qualitative research approach was used in this study. The perceptions and cases in qualitative researches were provided as realistic and holistic in the habitat (Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2005). Interpretive content analysis method was used out of qualitative research methods in the collection, solution and interpretation of data.

Study Group

48 primary school 4th grade students studying in primary schools located in Bayburt city center during 2012-2013 school year that was chosen by purposeful sampling and on a willing basis make up the study group of this research. The reason for including a limited number of students in the study is for the research of the matter thoroughly. Such an approach was adopted since qualitative researches do not have a generalization concern and allow in depth research. Easy access situation sampling was utilized in the research (Yıldırım and Şimşek, 2005: 112). The research is limited by data obtained from the study group. Distribution of the primary school students, who have participated in the study, according to their gender and the level of education of their parents is given in Table 1.

Table 1. Distribution of students, who have participated in the study, according to their gender and education level of their parents

Demographic characteristics		f	%
Gender	Girl	22	45.8
	Boy	26	54.2
Mother's education level	Primary school	2	4.2
	Middle school	24	50.0
	High school	12	25.0
	University	10	20.8
	Graduate school	-	-
Father's education level	Primary school	1	2.1
	Middle school	16	33.3
	High school	15	31.3
	University	10	20.8
	Graduate school	6	12.5

Data Collection Means and Process

The study was conducted in spring term of 2012-2013 school year. After receiving the permits necessary for the study, the researcher visited the primary schools which are to participate in the study and gathered information about the teachers and administrative. After this process, an application plan was made by school administrative and class teachers and the time and manner of the measurement tool was determined. The students were asked to draw pictures to describe active citizenship. The students who have participated in the study explained their drawings. The application was carried out during the period of one class (40 minutes).

Data Analysis

Visual and written elements, making up the active citizenship drawings of the students, form the data of the study. Obtained data were analyzed by interpretive content analysis method out of qualitative analysis methods (Ball and Smith, 1992; Banks, 2001). Interpretive content analysis contains the determination and definition of themes, subjects and events in visual and written elements obtained from the study (Giarelli and Tulman, 2003). Excess of the data obtained from the study have led the researcher to computer supported programs in order to ease the stages of data arrangement and interpretation. A qualitative data analysis statistics program allowed the storage of data, gathering of codes under themes, comparison of many data, repeat or correction of conducted processes when necessary and access to the obtained results when desired by the researcher. All drawings were studied by the researcher in order to form a general opinion and determine meaningful data units prior to coding. All elements included in the drawings were determined as codes of the study following this examination. The code list was updated by adding each new code emerging during analysis. Following the determination of codes, themes were determined and the codes were gathered under these themes. Codes and themes obtained for the validity and reliability of data, obtained from the study were reviewed by the researcher and in addition they were analyzed by another researcher who is an expert in social sciences education. Research reliability was estimated by using Miles and Huberman (1994) formula (Reliability=Consensus + Divergence x 100). Consistency between coding carried out by two different experts was determined as a total of 85%. Data obtained in the study were tabulated by frequency analysis.

FINDINGS

As a result of the analysis of the data obtained in the study, it was seen that primary school students included humans and structures such as houses and schools, and natural elements such as trees in their drawings. The mostly used one among these elements is humans (35 students). Garbage can (28 students), garbage (28 students), sun (15 students) and clouds (15 students) were the mostly included other elements. When the data obtained in the study were evaluated, a model was established for a better understanding by making the data visual of the results occurring, in terms of example events supplied by behaviors, which need to be owned by students as active citizens, and also in terms of elements included in the drawings. As it is clear in the model (Figure 1), active citizen perceptions of the primary school students can be gathered under three fundamental titles; sensibility to the environment, cooperation and social responsibility.

Majority of students who have participated in the study tried to reflect situations who are not sensible to the environment and who are sensible to the environment. Some of them emphasized more than one theme by dividing the page they draw into two or even four parts. When gender was concerned, it was observed that 68% of the female students and 77% of the male students drew persons who are throwing garbage to the floor.
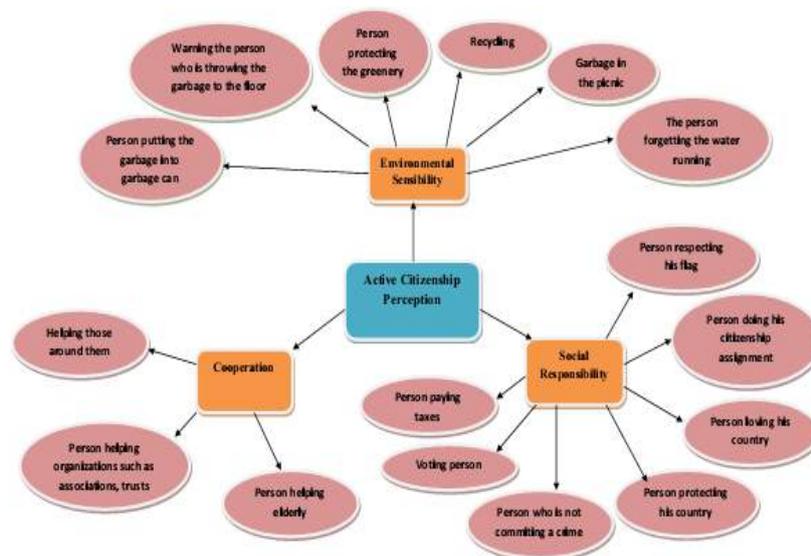
Figure 1. Model formed by the findings obtained in the study

Research data were treated according to three themes determined in the content analysis: 1) Environmental sensibility 2) Cooperation 3) Social responsibility

1) Environmental Sensibility Perception: When example events that need to be owned by citizen who are active in terms of sensibility to the environment and handled in the drawings, it was determined that "person putting the garbage into garbage can" was drawn the most in comparison to other behaviors (35 themes, 35/110). In addition, it was seen that behavior of "warning the person who throws garbage to the floor" followed up (19 themes, 19/110). When other behavior examples directed for the environmental sensibility are studied; it was seen that there were 10 drawings depicting the person who waters plants, protects trees, planting trees, expressing that you shouldn't step on grass, protecting greenery, there were 4 drawings depicting "the person who throws garbage to the recycling cans", 1 picture depicting "the person who is careful about the garbage in the picnic" and 1 picture depicting the "student who forgets the water running".

The examples of the environmental sensibility sub title, from the explanations of the students regarding their drawings, are as follows:

*"The dialog where the student warns his friend who does not put the garbage into the garbage can: **A**: Mert, why don't you throw your garbage into the garbage can? **B**. Who is going to go to the garbage can once again?"*- Student K.C.
*"A student standing next to the recycling can is calling out to one of his friends: **A**: Ahmet, don't throw garbage to the floor. **B**: But throwing garbage to the floor is so much fun, says, active citizen shouldn't say so"* – Student E.C.
"The student standing next to the recycling can warns one of his friends who is throwing garbage to the floor: ***A: Mehmet, why are you throwing garbage there? There is a garbage can right here!*** **B**: *Thank you for telling me, I will go and put this garbage to the garbage can."* Student I.U.
"Let's throw all waste garbage according to the line, let's throw the garbage in separate cans for this" – Student R.T.

Picture1. *The person, warning the individual who is throwing garbage to the floor*

2) Collaboration Perception: When sample cases to be possessed by active citizens in terms of collaboration that was tackled in the drawings are studied, it was determined that "the individual who helps persons in their surroundings" was drawn more in comparison to other behaviors (12 themes, 12/110). In addition, it was seen that "person helping organizations such as associations and trusts" came after this (5 themes, 5/110).

When other behavior examples in terms of collaboration were examined, 2 drawings were made depicting the "person who helps elderly".

Examples regarding the collaboration perception sub title depending on the explanations about the drawings of the students are as follows:

"I help my sisters and brothers, my mother and father"- Student B.Y.
"A student's finger is bleeding after having felled in the back yard. We should help him in this case, I drew that: A: Are you OK? B: Yes, I am fine. My finger is bleeding a little bit." –Student Y.D.
"I make contributions to LOSEV for children with leukemia" – Student A.E.
"I go and help an association" – A.T.
"When I travel in Bayburt Tour, I would give my seat to an elderly if he gets on the bus." – Student V.Y.
"If an elderly is having a hard time walking, I would help him to walk and hold his hand" – Student A.H.
"We can get stuff for needy kids in the school. We can help them to come to school more comfortably." – Student H.K.

Picture2. *Person helping the elderly*

3) Social Responsibility Perception: When sample cases to be possessed by active citizens in terms of social responsibility which is depicted in the pictures are examined, it was determined that "the person who is respecting his flag" was drawn more in comparison to other behaviors (8 themes). In addition, it was determined that the behavior of "the person who is doing his citizenship duties" followed this behavior (7 themes).

When other behavior examples for social responsibility were examined; there were 4 pictures depicting "the person who loves his country", 3 pictures depicting "the person protecting his country", 3 pictures depicting the "person who is serving his State", 1 picture depicting "the person who is not committing a crime", 1 picture depicting "the voting person", and there was 1 picture depicting "the person paying his taxes".

Examples regarding the social responsibility perception sub title depending on the explanations about the drawings of the students are as follows:

"Active citizens respect their flag, protect and love their country, do their citizenship duties and serve their State" – Student B.A.
"Active citizens love and protect their country" – Student O.A.
"Active citizens do duties and assignments their teachers assign and go to school" – Student A.B.
"Active citizens help their State, do their teaching job if they are teachers, firefighters prevent fires…" – Student A.T.
"Active citizens vote in elections." – Student R.T.
"Active citizens should pay their taxes" – Student D.A.

Picture 3. *Person having social responsibility perception*

CONCLUSION AND DISCUSSION

In this study, in order to reveal the active citizenship perceptions of children, the means of picture drawing and recitation of the drawn picture, which is not applied in the literature previously, were followed for enabling them to express their opinions about this matter. With this method based on interpretation, students were enabled to draw example cases and observations they experience in their surroundings and they were enabled to express them more easily. This method such as applied previous studies on different subjects with picture and cartoon drawing and mind map was liked by the students (Ayva, 2010).

They expressed in writing the cases that they have thought of but could not draw as they explained their drawings. When the students were asked to draw pictures with the active citizenship subject, it was determined that they pictured the citizens who are sensitive to the environment the most. Citizens who have the collaboration consciousness and citizens who have social responsibility followed up this case respectively.

The students focused on the necessity that persons who are sensitive to the environment should not throw garbage to the floor (Yılmaz *et al.*, 2002), they should warn the ones who throw garbage to the floor, they should protect and care for greenery always, they should throw garbage by degrading first (Alerby, 2000), and they should be careful about garbage in picnic areas. The students complained about the negligence of the persons around them as they depicted these example behaviors. This situation can give an idea that people around the children are not proper models even though they are grown ups and have sufficient education. The students expressed that they are uncomfortable with garbage spilled around. The students indicated that they have witnessed all of the

wrong behavior examples but they were afraid and hesitant to warn persons who are older than themselves, other than their own peers. It is obvious that the students along with their families need to be aware of the environment and its problems especially. Hence, conducted studies, trips and observations and activities carried out in nature have helped the students to understand the relationships between living and nonliving elements (Ballantyne and Packer, 2002; Manzanal, Barreiro and Jimenez, 1999) and that they have affected the development of the students positively in every aspect (Kimber, Smith, 1999; Tai and others, 2006).

In the student drawings, it was observed that the necessity that citizens with collaboration sensibility need to help their surroundings willingly was elaborated. They gave examples from their own close surroundings first. For instance, a child helping his father and a child helping his brother to cross the bridge. In addition, the children giving examples about the contributions made to civil society organizations such as associations and foundations, and example cases for the protection of elderly stand out regarding this matter.

In the student drawings, the necessity that citizens with social responsibility consciousness should respect their flag first of all and that they should do their citizenship duties was elaborated. This result from the study was correspond to studies which applied on national value (Deveci and Ay, 2009; Ercan, 2001). This case is an indicator that human rights and citizenship consciousness start to develop in still the 4th grade in the primary school.

Furthermore, in future researches, how the gender, class level, parent education level, social and cultural differences affect the senses of the students regarding active citizenship can be investigated.
Repeat of similar studies with different samplings and comparison of the results have been suggested.

REFERENCES

Alerby, E. (2000). A way of visualizing children's and young people's thoughts about the environment: a study of drawings, *Environmental Education Research*, 6(3), 205–222.

Ayva, Ö. (2010). Sosyal bilgiler dersi öğrenme öğretme süreci ile ilgili öğrenci görüşleri. International Conference on New Trends in Education and Their Implications. 11-13 November 2010. Antalya-Türkiye. 276-282.

Bacanlı, H. (2002). *Gelişim ve öğrenme.* Nobel yayınları: Ankara.

Ball, M. & Smith, G. (1992). *Analyzing and visualizing data.* London: Sage.

Ballantyne, R. & Packer, J. (2002). Nature-based excursions: School students' perceptions of learning in natural environments. *International Research in Geografical and Environmental Education,* 11, 218-236.

Banks, M. (2001). *Visual methods in school research.* London: Sage.

Barraza, L. (1999). Children's drawings about the environment. *Environmental Education Research,* 5 (1), 49-66.

Belet, Ş. D. Ve Türkkan, B. (2007, Nisan). *İlköğretim öğrencilerinin yazılı anlatım ve resimsel ifadelerinde algı ve gözlemlerini ifade biçimleri (Avrupa birliği örneği).* VI. Ulusal Sınıf Öğretmenliği Eğitimi Sempozyumu'nda sunulan bildiri, Anadolu Üniversitesi, Eskişehir.

Buldu, M. (2006). Young children's perceptions of scientist: A preliminary study. *Educational Research,* 48 (1), 121-132.

Çiftçi, A. (2008). *Vatandaşlık Bilgisi: Demokrasi ve İnsan Hakları.* Ankara: Gündüz Eğitim ve Yayıncılık.

De Weerd, M., Gemmeke, M. Ve Van Rj, C. (2005). *Indicators for monitoring active citizenship and citizenship education.* Research report fort he European Commision. Amsterdam: Regioplan. İnternet erişimi: ec.europa.eu/**education**/more-information/doc/**citizenship**_en.pdf

Deveci, H. ve Ay, T. S. (2009). İlköğretim öğrencilerinin günlüklerine göre günlük yaşamda değerler. *Uluslar arası Sosyal Araştırmalar Dergisi,* 2 (6), 167-181.

Duman, K., Yavuz, N. ve Karakaya, N. (2010). *İnsan Hakları ve Demokrasi (Vatandaşlık Bilgisi).* Ankara: Data Yayınları.

Elkatmış, M. (2012). İnsan hakları ve vatandaşlık ara disiplini kazanımlarının gerçekleşme düzeyi. *Akademik Bakış Dergisi,* 29, Mart-Nisan 2012, 1-20.

Ercan, İ. (2001). İlköğretim Sosyal Bilgiler Programında Ulusal ve Evrensel Değerler, (Yayımlanmamış Yüksek Lisans Tezi), Çanakkale: On Sekiz Mart Üniversitesi.

Ersoy, A. F. (2007). *"Sosyal Bilgiler Dersinde Öğretmenlerin Etkili Vatandaşlık Eğitimi Uygulamalarına İlişkin Görüşleri".* Yayınlanmamış Doktora Tezi. Eskişehir: Anadolu Üniversitesi Eğitim Bilimleri Enstitüsü.

Ersoy, A. ve Türkkan, B. (2009). İlköğretim öğrencilerinin resimlerinde internet algısı. *İlköğretim Online,* 8(1), 57-73.

Fleer, M. (2002). Curriculum compartmentalisation? A futures perpective on environmental education. *Environmental Education Researh,* 8(2), 137-154.

Giarelli, E. & Tulman, L. (2003). Methodological issues in the use of cartoons as data. *Qualitative Health Research,* 13(7), 945-956.

Hoskins, B. (2006). Draft framework on indicators for Active Citizenship. Ispra: CRELL, (from Bryony L. Hoskins Æ Massimiliano Mascherini 2009).

Joslin, B., Pope, R. & Lim, H. (2007). More than volunteering**:** active citizenship through youth volunteering.

Karasar, N. (2000). *Bilimsel araştırma yöntemleri.* Ankara: Nobel Yayınları.

Kimber, D. & Smith, M. (1999). Field work, visits and work outside the classroom, M. Ashley (Ed.), *Improving Learning and Teaching in the Humanities* (ss. 101-118), Florence, USA: Taylor & Francis.

Manzanal, R. F., Barreiro, R. L. M. & Jimenez, M. C. (1999). Relationship between ecology fieldwork and student attitudes toward environmental protection. *Journal of Research in Science Teaching,* 36, 431-453.

Miles, M. B. & Huberman, A. M. (1994). *Qualitative data analysis: An expanded source book.* Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Nomer, E. (1983). *Vatandaşlık Hukuku.* İstanbul: Filiz Kitabevi.

Oğuz, A. (2007). Sen hiç bilim adamı gördün mü? *VI. Ulusal Sınıf Öğretmenliği Eğitimi Sempozyumu Bildiriler Kitabı* içinde (s. 43-48). Ankara: Nobel Yayın Dağıtım.

Oktay, A. (2007). "İlköğretim: "Önemi ve insan hayatındaki yeri." İlköğretim çağına genel bir bir bakış içinde(Ed. Oktay, A. ve Unıtkan, Ö.). Morpa yayınları: İstanbul.

Oktay, A. (2007). (Ed.) *Eğitim kavramı ve eğitim düşüncesinin tarihsel gelişimi.* Eğitim bilimine giriş içinde. Pegema yayınları: Ankara.

Özsoy, S. (2012). İlköğretim öğrencilerinin çevre algılarının çizdikleri resimler aracılığıyla incelenmesi. *Kuram ve Uygulamada Eğitim Bilimleri,* 12(2), 1117-1139.

Piper, H. & Garratt, D. (2004). "İdentity and citizenship: some contradictions ın practice." *British Journal of educational studies*, 52 (3), 276-292.

Sadık, F., Çakan, H. & Artut, K. (2011). Çocuk resimlerinde yansıyan çevre sorunlarının sosyo-ekonomik farklılıklara göre analizi. *İlköğretim Online,* 10(3): 1066-1080.

Tai, L. Haque, M. T., McLellan, G. K., Knight, E. J. (2006). Designing outdoor environments for children. Blacklick, USA: McGraw-Hill Professional Publishing.

TDK. (1998). *Türkçe Sözlük.* Ankara: Türk Dil Kurumu Yayınları.

Türkkan, B. (2004). Okulöncesi dönem çocuklarının yaptıkları resimlerin aile yaşamlarına ilişkin ipuçları bakımından değerlendirilmesi. *I. Uluslararası Okulöncesi Eğitim Kongresi Bildiri Kitabı* içinde (s. 79-97). İstanbul: YA-PA Yayınları.

Türkmen, H. (2008). Turkish primary students' perceptions about scientist and what factors are affecting the image of the scientists. *Eurasia Journal of Mathematics, Science & Technology Education,* 4 (1), 55-61.

Yardımcı, E. ve Kılıç, G. B. (2010). Çocukların gözünden çevre ve çevre sorunları. *İlköğretim Online,* 9(3), 1122-1136.

Yıldırım, A. ve Şimşek, H. (2005). *Sosyal Bilimlerde Nitel Araştırma Yöntemleri.* 5.baskı. Ankara: Seçkin Yayınevi.

Yılmaz, A., Morgil, İ., Aktuğ, P. & Göbekli, İ. (2002). Ortaöğretim ve Üniversite Öğrencilerinin Çevre Kavramları ve Sorunları Konusundaki Bilgileri ve Öneriler. *Hacettepe Üniversitesi Eğitim Fakültesi Dergisi,* 22, 156-162.

Yurtul, F. ve Artut, K. (2008). Çocukların şiddeti algılama biçimlerinin çizdikleri resimlerine yansımaları. *Çocuk ve Gençlik Ruh Sağlığı Dergisi,* 15 (3), 149-155.