

## Changing Curriculum, Changing Values? Thematic Transformation in Social Studies Curriculum

Değişen Program, Değişen Değerler mi? Sosyal Bilgiler Öğretim Programlarında Tematik Dönüşüm

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**ABSTRACT:** This study examines how values are represented in the 2018 and 2024 Social Studies curricula implemented in Türkiye. Using qualitative document analysis, the study explores how values are thematically structured, linked to learning outcomes, and pedagogically framed within the curriculum texts. The analysis is informed by critical, transformative, and social-emotional perspectives on value education. The findings indicate that while both curricula emphasize value education, the 2024 curriculum, developed in line with the Maarif Model, adopts a more integrated and systematic approach, particularly in terms of affective and social-emotional dimensions. Thematic content analysis further reveals that values are conveyed not only through explicit statements but also through implicit and hidden curricular structures. Visual tools such as Sankey diagrams and thematic maps were employed to enhance the transparency and interpretability of the analysis. Overall, the study offers a critical and comprehensive evaluation of value education in curriculum documents and provides insights for policymakers and curriculum developers during periods of curricular transition.

**Keywords:** Curriculum analysis, values education, social studies curriculum, document analysis.

**ÖZ:** Bu çalışma, Türkiye’de uygulanan 2018 ve 2024 Sosyal Bilgiler öğretim programlarında değerlerin nasıl temsil edildiğini incelemeyi amaçlamaktadır. Nitel araştırma kapsamında döküman incelemesi yöntemi kullanılarak, değerlerin öğretim programı metinlerinde tematik olarak nasıl yapılandırıldığı, öğrenme çıktılarıyla nasıl ilişkilendirildiği ve pedagojik açıdan nasıl çerçeveslendiği analiz edilmiştir. Analiz süreci, değerler eğitime ilişkin eleştirel, dönüştürücü ve sosyal-duygusal yaklaşımlar doğrultusunda yürütülmüştür. Bulgular, her iki öğretim programında da değerler eğitime vurgu yapıldığını, ancak Maarif Modeli doğrultusunda geliştirilen 2024 öğretim programının özellikle duyuşsal ve sosyal-duygusal boyutlar açısından daha bütüncül ve sistematik bir yapı sunduğunu göstermektedir. Tematik içerik analizi, değerlerin yalnızca açık ifadeler yoluyla değil, aynı zamanda örtük ve gizli program yapıları aracılığıyla da aktarıldığını ortaya koymuştur. Analiz bulgularının daha şeffaf ve anlaşılır biçimde sunulabilmesi amacıyla Sankey diyagramları ve tematik haritalar gibi görsel araçlardan yararlanılmıştır. Genel olarak bu çalışma, öğretim programı dökümanlarını değerler eğitimi bağlamında eleştirel ve kapsamlı bir bakış açısıyla değerlendirmekte ve program geçiş süreçlerinde politika yapımcılar ile program geliştiricilere yönelik önemli çıkarımlar sunmaktadır.

**Anahtar kelimeler:** Program analizi, değerler eğitimi, sosyal bilgiler öğretim programı, döküman analizi.

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Education is a powerful social mechanism that not only conveys knowledge but also builds individuals' world of values. The content of lessons, especially at the primary education level, plays a critical role in children's ethical development, social belonging, and citizenship awareness. In this context, the Social Studies course should be considered not only as a content area but also as a cultural transmission ground that aims to construct values in individuals (Dilek, 2019; Karaman & Öztürk, 2020). However, how these values are represented in curriculum, what kind of themes they are associated with, and how they have transformed over time are still open to discussion (Ertürk Kara & Oral, 2021).

In Türkiye, the inclusion of values education in curriculum has gained a more systematic structure, especially with the curriculum updates made after 2005. In the 2018 and 2024 Social Studies curricula, it has started to be seen more clearly that values are structured thematically (Koç & Çamlıbel, 2023; Yılmaz & Bulut, 2022). In this context, how these values are presented, which learning outcomes they are associated with, and how students are enabled to internalize these values become as important as which values are included in the curriculum (Türkmen & Uzunkol, 2021).

The theoretical framework of this study is based on four main approaches to explain how values education in curriculum are shaped in terms of content and structure: Critical Curriculum Theory, Transformative Learning Theory, Social-Emotional Learning (SEL) Approach, and 21st Century Skills and Value Integration Framework. By considering these theories together, a holistic view of how curriculum texts carry meanings at the pedagogical, socio-emotional and ideological levels are evaluated.

First, Critical Curriculum Theory, represented by Apple (2019), argues that curriculum are not socially neutral texts; rather, they reflect ideologies, value systems and political priorities. According to this approach, curriculum are not only documents that convey knowledge, but also social tools that shape individuals. Especially in the context of values education, which values are included in the curriculum and which are excluded, as well as which learning outcomes these values are integrated with, should be critically questioned (Apple, 2019; Koç & Çamlıbel, 2023). This framework was used to examine the ideological foundations behind the value emphases analyzed in the 2018 and 2024 Social Studies curricula.

Secondly, the Transformative Learning Theory developed by Mezirow (2009) argues that individuals not only acquire knowledge but also go through a cognitive transformation by making sense of this knowledge through their own life experiences. This perspective sees the process of transferring values not as a passive learning process but as an active and questioning transformation process. Whether the values in the curriculum are structured in a way to support students' skills such as critical thinking, self-evaluation and understanding alternative perspectives has been evaluated in line with this theory (Cranton, 2016; Ertürk Kara & Oral, 2021).

Thirdly, the Social-Emotional Learning (SEL) approach is based on the internalization of values through their impact on the individual's social relationships, emotional development, and self-awareness, rather than learning values only at the cognitive level. The five basic SEL components (self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship building skills, and responsible decision-making) put

forward by Casel (2020) were taken as the basis for analyzing how the curriculum link values education and student development in this study. With this approach, it was questioned whether values are not only "taught" but also constructs that student "learn by living" in a social context (Dilek, 2019; Elias et al., 2015; Yılmaz & Bulut, 2022).

Finally, the Framework for Integrating Values with 21st Century Skills proposed by OECD (2018) argues that contemporary curriculum should aim not only to transfer academic knowledge but also to help individuals develop transdisciplinary skills such as global citizenship, ethical awareness, and social responsibility. In this framework, it is examined how values go beyond the dimensions of knowledge and skills and are integrated with individuals' life skills. Whether values are presented together with 21st century skills such as problem solving, collaboration, and critical thinking was analyzed in curriculum texts (Trilling & Fadel, 2009; Türkmen & Uzunkol, 2021).

Through this theoretical framework, the representation of values education in curriculum has been comprehensively addressed in terms of its ideological underpinnings, its capacity for individual transformation, its social-emotional effects, and its integration with contemporary skills. This approach not only focuses on the existence of values but also offers a holistic analysis of how they are constructed, how they are presented and what pedagogical functions they serve. The significance of the research lies not only in its focus on the representation of values in curriculum, but also in its comparative analysis of how two different curriculum 2018 and 2024, which are currently in effect simultaneously in Türkiye, are structured contextually. While the 2024 curriculum has been implemented only in grade 5 as of the 2024-2025 academic year, the 2018 curriculum is in effect in other grade levels (grades 4, 6, 7 and 8). This situation represents a unique period in which two different pedagogical approaches are being implemented simultaneously in Türkiye in terms of values education. In this context, this study aims to provide important data for both practitioners and policy makers by analyzing the pedagogical, ideological, and emotional dimensions of values in curriculum through different curriculum texts in the transition process (Gündüz & Baki, 2022; Koç & Çamlıbel, 2023; Yıldırım, 2023).

Academic articles published on the subject and scientific studies in the literature were also examined as supporting data sources. In this context, the studies of various researchers such as Koç and Çamlıbel (2023), Yılmaz and Bulut (2022), Ertürk Kara and Oral (2021) contributed to comparative evaluations in the analysis of values in curriculum. In addition, the values education- based content analysis conducted by Kaya and Akbaş (2018) provided an important framework for interpreting the thematic design of curriculum documents. Again, studies such as Karasu (2022) and Arıkan (2020) provided a theoretical basis for this research by discussing the debates in the literature on the ideological representation of values in curriculum. In addition, Gündüz and Baki's (2022) analysis from the perspective of educational policies provided a historical background on the formation processes of current curriculum.

Despite the growing body of research on values education and curriculum reform, recent comparative document analyses have largely focused on either single curriculum versions or explicitly stated value components, often overlooking the affective, social-emotional, and implicit dimensions of value education (Demirbaş ve Yorulmaz, 2025; Güven ve Dere, 2025; Ortaköylü ve Ünal, 2025). As noted by Fullan (2016), curriculum reforms are rarely examined as dynamic transitional periods where

different curriculum frameworks and pedagogical orientations coexist. Addressing this gap, the present study offers a comparative analysis of the 2018 and 2024 Social Studies curricula in Türkiye by examining how values are explicitly and implicitly structured, pedagogically framed, and linked to learning outcomes. By doing so, the study extends existing research through a multidimensional and context-sensitive analysis of curriculum change in values education.

Despite the expanding literature on values education and curriculum reform, existing research has predominantly examined values either through single curriculum documents or through explicitly stated value lists. Although there are comparative document analyses that systematically examine how values are pedagogically framed, implicitly structured, and related to learning outcomes in successive curriculum versions, such as those by Cilesiz and Greckhamer (2020) and Azzam et al. (2021), these studies remain limited in scope. Moreover, few studies have addressed curriculum reforms as transitional processes in which different curricular logics coexist simultaneously, particularly in relation to the affective and socio-emotional dimensions of values education (Güven & Dere, 2025; Topal, 2025). In this context, although there are similar studies by Çebi Aslan and Yazar Kaptan (2025), the parallel implementation of the 2018 and 2024 Social Studies curricula in Türkiye offers a distinctive empirical context that has not yet been sufficiently examined in the literature.

This study aims to comparatively examine the values in the Social Studies curriculum of 2018 and 2024 implemented in Türkiye. Accordingly, the main research question is not only to determine the numerical or verbal presence of the values in the curriculum, but also to provide an in-depth analysis on what kind of meanings these values carry contextually, which outcomes they are integrated with, and how their pedagogical functions are structured. In this context, the data obtained from the official curriculum texts through the document analysis method used in the study were analyzed thematically through qualitative content analysis. Thus, it is aimed to shed light not only on the visible representation of value education, but also on the ideological, emotional, and cognitive structure behind it. The problem identified in line with the research objective is as follows:

With which themes and outcomes are values education associated in the 2018 and 2024 Social Studies curriculum and how has it transformed in this context? Based on this identified sub-problem, the sub-problems that need to be addressed are as follows:

1. Which values are included in the 2018 Social Studies Curriculum and which learning outcomes are associated with these values?
2. Which values are included in the 2024 Social Studies Curriculum and which learning outcomes are associated with these values?
3. How are the values in the 2018 and 2024 Curriculums structured in terms of pedagogical, ideological, and emotional dimensions?
4. What are the similarities and differences between the two Curriculums in terms of thematic presentation of values in the curriculum texts?
5. What are the unique aspects of the 2024 Curriculum developed in line with the Education Model in terms of values education?

## Method

In this section, information on research design, data sources, data collection and analysis processes are presented in detail. The research was structured within the framework of qualitative research paradigm and conducted with document analysis technique.

### Research Design

This study was designed based on qualitative research methods. Qualitative research designs aim to reveal the meaning dimensions of social phenomena by enabling in-depth examination of individuals, phenomena, or documents (Creswell, 2013). In this context, the study was structured according to the document analysis design. Document analysis is a widely used design in qualitative research and involves the systematic examination of existing documents (Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2021). This technique aims to describe and interpret phenomena, concepts, or themes through existing documents (Bowen, 2009). Thanks to document analysis, it is possible to collect retrospective data; traces of social changes can be followed by analyzing official documents such as education curriculums (Corbin & Strauss, 2008; Yıldırım, 2023).

For this study, the 2018 and 2024 Social Studies curriculum in Türkiye were selected as the main data sources. The documents in question were analyzed with a contextual and thematic approach; the themes with which values are associated, how they are structured and how they are integrated with learning outcomes were discussed comparatively. The main reason for choosing document analysis as the research design is that curriculum are official and structured documents and a systematic evaluation of the representation of value education can be made through these documents (Bowen, 2009; Corbin & Strauss, 2008; Gökçe, 2006; Yıldırım, 2023).

Although multiple theoretical frameworks are employed in this study, each framework serves a distinct analytical purpose at different stages of the analysis. Critical Curriculum Theory is used to examine the ideological and structural assumptions embedded in curriculum texts, particularly in relation to power, norms, and value hierarchies. Transformative Learning Theory informs the interpretation of how values are framed as agents of personal and social change within learning outcomes. Social-Emotional Learning (SEL) provides an analytical lens for identifying affective and relational dimensions of values education, especially those related to empathy, responsibility, and emotional regulation. Finally, the 21st Century Skills and Value Integration Framework is used to contextualize values within contemporary competency-based educational discourses. Together, these frameworks function complementarily rather than redundantly, enabling a multidimensional interpretation of values education in curriculum documents.

### Data Sources

The main data sources of this study are the Social Studies curriculum for the years 2018 and 2024, which were published and officially put into effect by the Ministry of National Education of the Republic of Türkiye. These curriculum documents were selected because they provide comprehensive and comparable content that directly serves the purpose of the study. In addition, these curricula constitute the primary reference framework for teachers, as Social Studies textbooks are developed in

direct alignment with the curriculum and classroom instruction is largely structured according to these official documents. The 2018 curriculum is currently implemented in 4th, 6th, 7th, and 8th grades and includes a thematic structure in terms of values education. The 2024 Curriculum, on the other hand, was developed based on the Maarif Model and has been implemented only in grade 5.

These documents were systematically analyzed in line with the principles of qualitative content analysis, and the place of values in curriculum was evaluated in a multidimensional way from pedagogical, socio-emotional and structural perspectives (Bowen, 2009; Yıldırım, 2023; Karasu, 2022; Kaya & Akbaş, 2018).

### **Reliability and Validity of the Study**

In this study, a series of strategies were implemented to increase the reliability and validity of the study in the qualitative data collection and analysis process. The 2018 and 2024 Social Studies Curriculum, which constitute the data sources, are official documents published by the Ministry of National Education and support the reliability of the study due to their status. The coding structure used in the analysis of the data was determined by comparing it with previous studies and conceptual frameworks in the literature (Bowen, 2009; Nowell et al., 2017). The themes obtained during the coding process were shaped in accordance with the initial questions of the study. Although double coding was not used, internal consistency was checked by recording the same data set at various times during the coding process.

To ensure reliability, the coding process was conducted in a systematic and transparent manner. Initially, all curriculum documents were independently coded by two researchers with expertise in curriculum and values education. Each coder analyzed the documents separately using the same coding framework developed during the preliminary analysis phase. Following independent coding, the coders compared their coding decisions and discussed any discrepancies to reach a shared understanding of value categories and thematic boundaries.

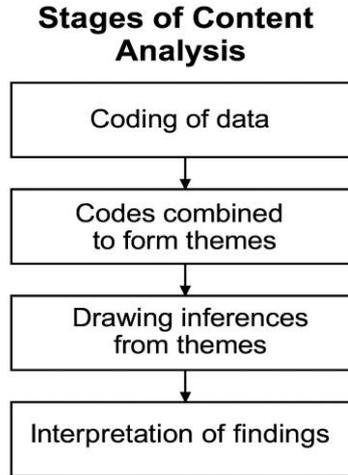
The findings were presented in direct relation to the achievement statements in the curriculum, thereby increasing the meaningfulness and content validity of the data. In this study, achievement statements refer to the officially defined learning attainments that specify the knowledge, skills, and competencies students are expected to acquire at the end of instructional processes. In addition, the transferability and confirmability of the data were ensured by integrating sample achievement statements into the text and directly quoting from the curriculum (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Furthermore, the principle of ‘thick description,’ an important reliability criterion in qualitative data analysis (avoiding excessive generalisations and clearly defining the context of the study), each finding was analyzed in detail within its own context (Creswell & Poth, 2018). Thus, the study has been made dependable in terms of both methodological transparency and scientific consistency.

### **Data Analysis**

This study used the content analysis method to analyze the data obtained. Content analysis is a systematic approach that aims to reveal meaningful themes in documents and is used as an effective method especially in the analysis of structured texts such as curriculum (Neuendorf, 2017; Krippendorff, 2018). Four main stages were

followed in the data analysis process: (1) coding the data, (2) identifying themes, (3) establishing relationships between themes, and (4) interpretation.

Figure 1  
*Stages of Content Analysis*



In the coding process, the values in the 2018 and 2024 Social Studies curriculum were analyzed based on explicit, implicit, and contextual statements. In this process, both outcome statements and thematic headings were examined in detail and the pedagogical functions with which the values in both curriculums were integrated were systematically analyzed (Mayring, 2014). During the coding process, both inductive and deductive approaches were used together. In the first stage, the values and related outcomes directly observed in the texts were identified; in the second stage, these data were interpreted in line with the theoretical frameworks in the literature (Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2016).

In the process of determining the themes, the coded data were grouped in the integrity of meaning, and the value-oriented themes prominent in the curriculum (for example: national unity, environmental awareness, social responsibility, human rights) were categorized. While establishing relationships between themes, the focus was on how values are structured not only in cognitive but also in affective and social aspects (Arıkan, 2020; Kaya & Akbaş, 2018). Accordingly, the thematic framework was constructed to reflect the multidimensional nature of values education as embedded in the curriculum. During the analysis process, expert opinions were consulted to ensure reliability and validity, and the inter-coder agreement rate was measured. The coding procedures were conducted by two researchers with expertise in curriculum and instruction and values education, one of whom was a co-author of the study, while the other was an external expert independent of the research process. After independent coding, the findings were compared, and an inter-coder agreement rate of 85% was achieved, which is considered acceptable for qualitative data analysis (Miles & Huberman, 1994). This process was considered as an important data validation step supporting the analytical reliability of the study.

The analysis combined deductive and inductive strategies in an iterative manner. Initially, a deductive framework was established based on the selected theoretical perspectives, which guided the identification of broad value categories and analytical dimensions. Within this framework, inductive coding was then applied to allow value-related patterns and sub-themes to emerge directly from the curriculum texts. When inductively generated codes aligned with existing theoretical categories, they were integrated accordingly; however, codes that could not be fully explained by the predefined framework were retained and examined as context-specific value expressions. This reciprocal interaction between theory-driven and data-driven coding enabled both analytical consistency and openness to emerging meanings, thereby enhancing the transparency and rigor of the analysis.

As a result, the analysis process not only described the existence of values in the curriculum but also revealed in depth how these values are structured in the curriculum, how they are pedagogically operationalized, and through which themes they are presented to students. This multi-layered analysis approach enabled a holistic evaluation of the representation of value education in curriculum (see Gündüz & Baki, 2022; Koç & Çamlıbel, 2023; Ertürk Kara & Oral, 2021).

To enhance methodological transparency, concrete examples were used during the coding process. For instance, learning outcomes explicitly emphasizing concepts such as responsibility, justice, or respect were initially identified through keyword-based and contextual reading of curriculum statements. These statements were then coded according to their dominant value orientation and grouped under broader thematic categories (e.g., social responsibility, ethical awareness, civic values). In cases where a learning outcome reflected multiple values, coding decisions were guided by the primary pedagogical emphasis of the statement. This iterative process enabled a clear differentiation between closely related values and ensured consistency in theme construction across curriculum documents.

## Findings

In this section, the structuring of values in the 2018 and 2024 Social Studies curriculum were analyzed in detail in line with the five sub-problems of the study. The findings were presented separately under each sub-problem to ensure thematic integrity. The learning outcomes with which values are associated, how they are classified under themes, and how their pedagogical functions are shaped were revealed based on content analysis. The findings obtained with this approach allow for a comparative evaluation of the values education approaches of two different curriculum periods in Türkiye.

### Values and Their Alignment with Learning Outcomes in the 2018 Social Studies Curriculum

Within the scope of this sub-problem, *the values in the 2018 Social Studies Curriculum and the learning outcomes associated with these values were examined*. In the analysis process, the unit and outcome structures of the curriculum at different grade levels were coded in detail; the themes within which each value is included and what kind of behavioral objectives are presented to students were revealed through tables. The findings provide important clues in terms of understanding the pedagogical functionality and contextual diversity of values. The data obtained in this context are

tabulated and interpreted in detail below. In Table 1, the relationship between the values in the 2018 Social Studies Curriculum and learning outcomes is presented with examples.

Table 1

*Examples of Learning Outcomes Associated with Values in the 2018 Social Studies Curriculum*

Grade	Unit Title	Associated Value	Acquisition Expression
5	Individual and Society	Justice	"Recognizes that justice ensures unity and order in social life." (Outcome 5.1.2: "Recognizes that justice ensures unity and order in social life.")
6	Agree with Management	Civic Responsibility, Democracy	"Explain the importance of participating in democratic processes with examples." (Outcome 6.2.3: "Explains the importance of participating in democratic processes with examples.")
7	Economy and Life	Responsibility	"Evaluates the social effects of individual economic choices." (Outcome 7.3.1: "Evaluates the social effects of individual economic choices.")

When Table 1 is examined, it is seen that values are not only abstract concepts but also directly associated with certain outcome statements through the units at different grade levels of the curriculum. For example, while the value of justice is emphasized in the 5th grade "Individual and Society" unit, the relationship of this value with social unity and order is clearly stated in the outcome statement (*Outcome 5.1.2: "Realizes that justice ensures unity and order in social life."*, MoNE, 2018, p. 11). Similarly, in the Grade 6 "I Participate in Governance" unit, the values of democracy and participation are presented in a way that helps students understand the importance of participating in democratic processes (*Outcome 6.2.3: "Explains the importance of participating in democratic processes with examples."*, MoNE, 2018, p. 21). This structure reflects a teaching approach that aims not only to transfer values but also to help students transform these values into behaviors. In addition, in the Grade 7 "Economy and Life" unit, the value of responsibility is associated with the social effects of economic choices (*Outcome 7.3.1: "Evaluates the social effects of individual economic choices."*, MoNE, 2018, p. 28), while in the Grade 8 "International Relations and Türkiye" unit, the values of peace and tolerance are explained through international events (*Outcome 8.5.2: "Explains the importance of peace in international relations with examples of events."*, MoNE, 2018, p. 33). These examples show that the values are presented in a structure that aims to develop students' social awareness and active citizenship skills.

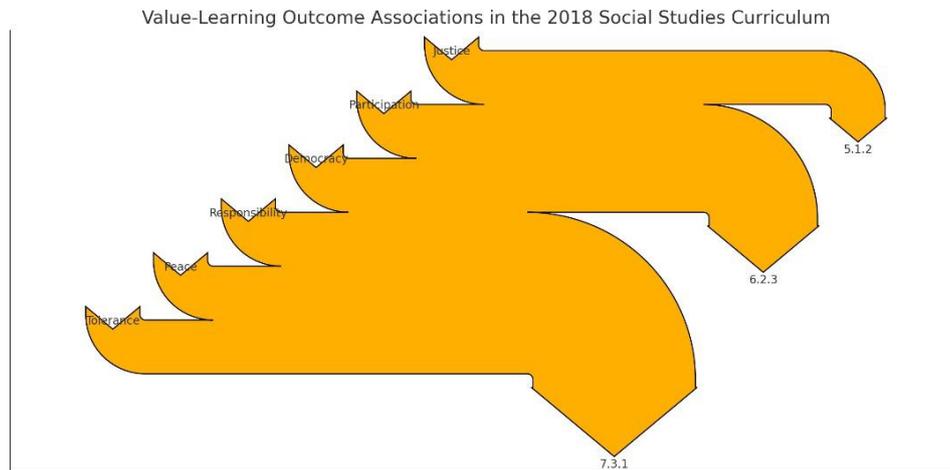
When the general structure of the 2018 curriculum is examined, it is noteworthy that values such as "justice", "responsibility", "democracy" and "peace" are repeatedly

covered at many grade levels. Especially at the "5th grade" level, it is seen that the values focusing on the individual- society relationship aim to help students gain basic citizenship awareness. On the other hand, values such as "tolerance" and "benevolence" are mostly addressed at higher levels in the context of historical or international relations. This shows that the curriculum constructs values in a developmental order appropriate to the grade level. On the other hand, although some outcomes do not directly name the relevant value, they convey an indirect value through the behavioral objectives they contain. For example, the statement "*Outcome 6.1.1. Explains the duties of local government units.*" does not directly name a value; however, this outcome is implicitly related to the values of responsibility, civic responsibility, and citizenship. Such indirect structures need to be carefully analyzed in terms of the holism of value education.

Some outcomes in the 2018 curriculum are structured in a way that affects students' attitudes and behaviors, rather than just providing information. For example, the statement "*Outcome 5.1.4. Recognizes the contribution of social roles to the functioning of society.*" aims to provide students with affective goals such as empathy and social responsibility. This shows that the Curriculum does not limit values education only to the cognitive level but aims for multidisciplinary learning. Figure 2 shows the Sankey Diagram showing which themes are related to which learning outcome.

Figure 2

*Sankey Diagram of the Association Between Values and Learning Outcomes in the 2018 Social Studies Curriculum*



In this study, Sankey diagrams were used to visualize the relationships between values and learning outcomes. Sankey diagrams are flow-based visualization tools that allow the representation of multiple and directional relationships between components through proportional connections (Schmidt, 2008). In the diagram, values are positioned on one side and learning outcomes on the other, while the connecting flows indicate the associations between them. The width of each flow represents the number of learning outcomes linked to a specific value, enabling a visual comparison of how extensively each value is embedded across the curriculum. In this way, it becomes possible to

clearly observe both which values are associated with a greater number of learning outcomes and which learning outcomes integrate multiple values. Thus, the diagram provides an integrated and transparent overview of the structural patterns of values education within the 2018 Social Studies Curriculum, supporting the interpretation of findings derived from textual analysis.

### Values and Learning Outcome Associations in the 2024 Social Studies Curriculum

Within the scope of this sub-problem, *the values in the 2024 Social Studies Curriculum and the learning outcomes associated with these values* were examined. The 2024 curriculum is structured based on the "Education Model" and is implemented at the 1st and 5th grade levels. For this reason, the analysis process was conducted only on the outcomes and thematic contents at these two grade levels. How the values in the curriculum are matched with learning outcomes and how they are structured in line with pedagogical objectives are detailed through sample outcomes.

Table 2

*Examples of Outcomes Associated with Values in the 2024 Social Studies Curriculum*

Class Level	Unit Title	Associated Value	Acquisition Expression
Grade 5	Rules in Community Life	Justice, Responsibility	5.1.2. "Explain the role of social rules in maintaining social order with examples."
Grade 5	Nature and Man	Environmental Awareness	5.3.1. "Recognizes that the natural environment should be protected and take responsibility in this regard."
Grade 5	Living Together	Solidarity, Tolerance	5.4.2. "Explain the importance of living together with individuals of diverse cultures and beliefs in terms of social peace."
Grade 5	Learning My Rights	Justice, Equality	5.5.3. "Explains the importance of protecting children's rights for the individual and society."

When Table 2 is examined, it is seen that the 2024 curriculum aims to reflect the core values directly and explicitly in the outcome statements. For example, at the first-grade level, values based on interpersonal relationships such as "respect", "love" and "responsibility" are explicitly included in the outcome statements. At the fifth-grade level, it is seen that values reflecting social and environmental sensitivity are more prominent. For example, the statement "Explains the role of social rules in maintaining social order with examples." in learning outcome 5.1.2 overlaps with the values of "justice" and "responsibility". In addition, the statement "Recognizes that the natural environment should be protected and takes responsibility in this regard" in outcome 5.3.1 of the "Nature and Man" unit reflects the emphasis on environmental sensitivity in a concrete

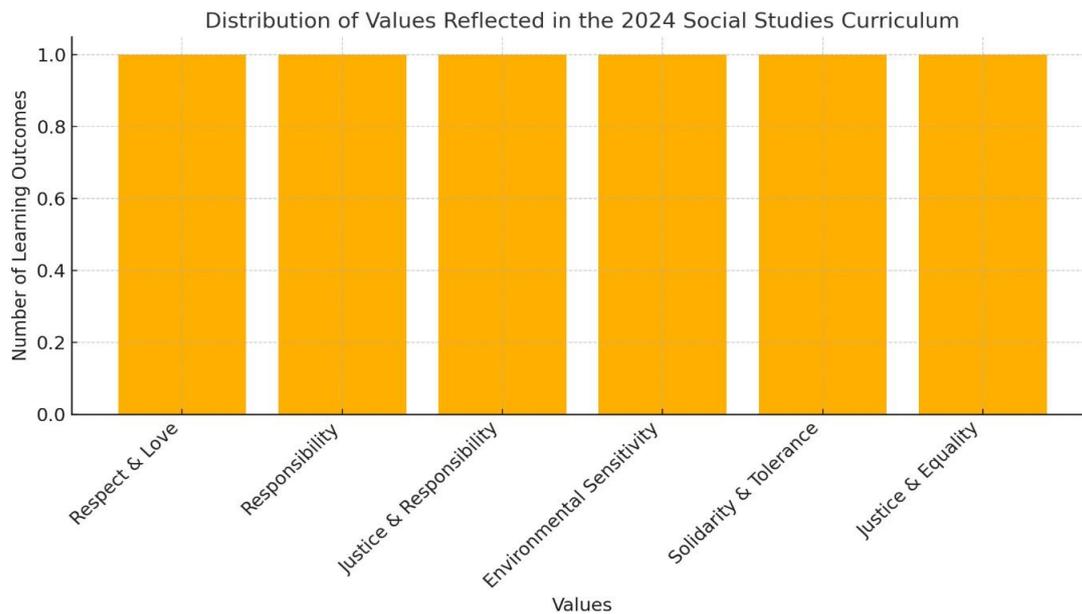
way. Learning outcome 5.4.2, "Explains the importance of living together with individuals of different cultures and beliefs in terms of social peace." supports the values of tolerance and cooperation. At the first-grade level, values based on interpersonal relationships such as "respect", "love" and "responsibility" stand out, while in the fifth grade, values reflecting social and environmental sensitivity are more dominant. Especially in the units "Rules in Social Life" and "I Learn My Rights", values such as justice, equality and responsibility are taught by associating them with rules and rights, which shows that the Curriculum addresses values in a way to establish a connection with the social system.

The emphasis on environmental awareness in the "Nature and Man" unit overlaps with the principles of sustainable living in the context of 21st century skills. At the same time, in the "Life Together" unit, the values of tolerance and cooperation are presented to students through achievements that encourage peaceful coexistence of differences. This structure shows that the Curriculum balances value content at both individual and social levels. The 2024 Curriculum distributes value intensity in a balanced manner according to grade levels. In Grade 1, individual and family-based values such as love, respect and responsibility come to the forefront, while in Grade 5, values that support higher-level ethical understandings such as social order, environmental awareness and human rights come to the fore. This thematic gradation is consistent with developmental psychology. Since the 2024 curriculum was only implemented in 5th grade, the results for other grades will be seen in the coming years.

Another striking feature of the new curriculum is that values are explicitly emphasized not only in the statements of learning outcomes but also in activity examples and learning outcomes. In this respect, the 2024 curriculum brings a more systematic approach to values education and opens space for practices that target students' social-emotional development. The Curriculum aims not only to transfer values directly, but also to provide values in implicit ways. For example, the statement "explains the importance of living together with individuals of different cultures and beliefs in terms of social peace" in outcome 5.4.2. shows that values such as tolerance and empathy are strongly reflected even though they are not explicitly stated in the outcome text. This situation reveals that value education is not only a normative transfer but also structured within social contexts.

As a result, the 2024 Social Studies Curriculum associates' values with achievements that are appropriate to the developmental level of the individual and that promote social integration and environmental awareness. The values in the Curriculum are presented in a structure that aims to ensure students' active participation and develop a sense of social responsibility, not just a normative transfer. In the 2024 Social Studies Curriculum, it is seen that values are not only presented as knowledge, but also a learning approach that aims to transform them into behaviors is adopted. For example, in learning outcome 5.3.1, students are asked to "*Realize that the natural environment should be protected and take responsibility in this regard*". Such learning outcomes carry a pedagogical depth that goes beyond recognizing the value and aims to integrate it into students' lives.

Figure 3

*Distribution of Values Reflected in the 2024 Social Studies Curriculum*

\* Number of Learning Outcomes: Proportional Representation of Learning Outcomes

This diagram illustrates how the core values emphasized in the 2024 Social Studies Curriculum are associated with learning outcomes across all grade levels covered by the curriculum (Grades 4–8). In this study, *core values* refer to the officially stated fundamental value categories explicitly defined and emphasized in the curriculum as guiding principles for values education. The horizontal axis represents these core values, while the vertical axis indicates the number of learning outcomes in which each value is explicitly addressed. A value of “1” on the vertical axis corresponds to one learning outcome, whereas intermediate values on the scale reflect proportional representation rather than fractional learning outcomes. Accordingly, the diagram shows that each core value is represented at least once across the curriculum, suggesting a balanced and inclusive approach to values education that supports cognitive, effective, and ethical development. This visualization facilitates a clearer interpretation of how values are systematically integrated into the overall structure of the 2024 Social Studies Curriculum.

### **Pedagogical, Ideological, and Emotional Structuring of Values across the 2018 and 2024 Curricula**

Within the scope of this sub-problem, *the similarities, and differences regarding value education in the 2018 and 2024 Social Studies Curriculum* were analyzed. The findings aim to reveal how values are managed in the two curriculums, which values are prominent, and how these values are associated with the outcomes. This comparative analysis provides important clues to evaluate the change and development in the pedagogical approach of the curriculums.

The outcome statements in Table 3 reveal both elements of continuity and structural changes in value education between the 2018 and 2024 Social Studies Curriculum. While in the 2018 curriculum, the values of justice and responsibility are

mostly addressed within the axis of social structure and individual behaviors, in the 2024 curriculum, it is observed that these values are introduced at earlier grade levels within the scope of Social Studies education and supported by more structured learning outcomes. For example, in the 2024 Curriculum, the value of responsibility is addressed at the beginning of Social Studies instruction through learning outcome 1.2.3, reflecting an approach that emphasizes the early integration of value education within this course.

Table 3

*Value- Acquisition Relationship in the 2018 and 2024 Social Studies Curriculum*

Curriculum	Value	Acquisition Number	Acquisition Expression
2018 Curriculum	Justice	5.3.2.	Explains the importance of justice in society life.
2018 Curriculum	Responsibility	6.1.3.	Acts with a sense of responsibility in daily life.
2024 Curriculum	Justice	5.1.2.	Explains the role of social rules in maintaining social order with examples.

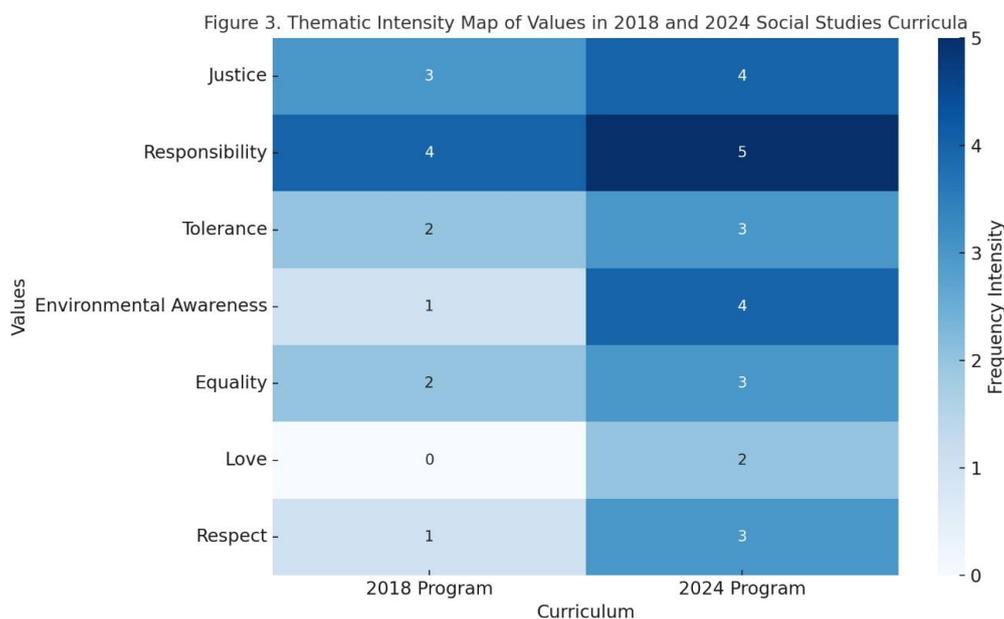
Similarly, while the value of justice is addressed as a requirement of social life in the 2018 curriculum, in the 2024 curriculum this value is associated with social rules and supported with concrete examples from a normative perspective. In this context, the statement "*Explains the role of social rules in maintaining social order with examples.*" in outcome 5.1.2. shows that both justice and responsibility values are functionally integrated into the curriculum. While in the 2018 Social Studies Curriculum, values are mostly presented with diagnostic and knowledge-based statements, in the 2024 curriculum, values are transformed into behavioral goals and concretized with observable outcomes. For example, while the outcome "*Explains the importance of justice in social life*" (5.3.2.) in the 2018 curriculum aims for abstract awareness, the outcome "*Explains the role of social rules in maintaining social order with examples*" (5.1.2.) in the 2024 curriculum aims for students to develop behaviors based on values.

While the 2018 curriculum extends value education mostly to the middle school level, in the 2024 curriculum, values are structured starting from the early stages of Social Studies instruction. For example, the outcome "*Explains the importance of fulfilling responsibilities at school*" (1.2.3.) in the 2024 curriculum reflects a curriculum approach to the acquisition of values at an early age. This shows that the Curriculum has become more consistent with the principles of developmental psychology. Apart from this, it is noteworthy that the same value titles are associated with different content themes in both Curriculums. In the 2018 curriculum, the value of "Responsibility" is addressed at the individual level (6.1.3.- "*Acts responsibly in daily life*"), while in the 2024 curriculum, the same value is associated with the purpose of maintaining social order (5.1.2.). This situation points to a pedagogical shift in the way values are integrated with outcomes.

While the 2018 Social Studies Curriculum focuses more on the values of democratic citizenship and social responsibility, the 2024 curriculum is designed to raise "virtuous people" within the framework of the Maarif Model. For this reason, the values in the 2024 Curriculum are not only knowledge or attitudes but also presented in an integrity that aims at the moral development of the student. As a result, it is seen that both Curriculums attach importance to value education, but the 2024 Curriculum adopts a more structured and systematic approach. These differences between the Curriculums provide noteworthy findings not only at the content level but also in terms of pedagogical design, age group appropriateness and the way it is reflected in learning outcomes.

Figure 4

*Thematic Density Map of Values in the 2018 and 2024 Social Studies Curriculum*



This chart presents the comparative distribution of values in the 2018 and 2024 Social Studies Curriculum on a thematic level. On the map, values that are common or differentiated in both curriculums are shown in shades of color: darker shades represent values that recur more frequently or are associated with many outcomes, while lighter shades represent values that are addressed at a more limited level. This visualization makes the weight of values in the curriculum intuitively interpretable and contributes to conceptualizing the structural differences in value education. In conclusion, it is seen that both curriculums attach importance to value education, but the 2024 curriculum adopts a more structured and systematic approach. These differences between the Curriculums provide noteworthy findings not only at the content level but also in terms of pedagogical design, age group appropriateness, and the way they are reflected in learning outcomes.

**Comparative Thematic Representation of Values in Curriculum Texts**

This section analyzes *which skills are prominent in the outcomes related to values education in the 2018 and 2024 Social Studies Curriculum*. The findings reveal the basic skill areas included in the outcomes related to values education in both curriculum and aim to determine which skills are more emphasized and which ones are in the background. This analysis aims to show that values education is not only a

conceptual transfer, but also a pedagogical process that aims to develop an individual's social and individual skills.

In the first stage, the skill-oriented statements in the outcome statements were analyzed and categorized. Frequently recurring skills were identified and the values associated with these skills were determined by sample outcomes from both the 2018 and 2024 curriculum. The following skill titles stood out in this analysis:

- Critical Thinking
- Problem Solving
- Empathizing
- Decision Making
- Community Engagement
- Value Driven Interpretation
- Ethical Assessment

In addition, in the 2024 curriculum, it was observed that these skills were linked to more meaningful and observable outputs on a value axis with the effect of the Maarif Model, which focuses on the development of "virtuous individuals". This is especially evident in the 2024 Social Studies Curriculum. In the curriculum, skills such as individual responsibility, social sensitivity, empathy, and ethical decision-making are emphasized directly or indirectly in the statements of learning outcomes, and students are aimed to gain not only knowledge but also the competence to use this knowledge in a value-oriented manner. For example, statements such as "*Discusses the effects of empathy on social relations in society*" (6.1.5.) focus not only on the transfer of social knowledge but also on the development of behavioral skills in students.

Table 4

*Prominent Skills and Sample Outcomes for Values Education (2018-2024 Curriculums)*

Skill Area	Related Values	Sample Outcome (Curriculum and Code)
Empathizing	Respect, Tolerance	"Discusses the Effects of Empathy in Society on Social Relations." (6.1.5., 2024)
Decision Making	Responsibility, Justice	"Develop Solution Suggestions for Social Problems." (7.2.2., 2024)
Problem Solving	Solidarity, Patriotism	"Generates solutions to social problems encountered in daily life." (5.3.3., 2018)
Community Engagement	Democracy, Participation	"Develop suggestions for the functioning of local governments." (6.4.1., 2024)
Value Driven Interpretation	Solidarity, Justice	"Analyzes the Impact of Values in Evaluating Historical Events." (7.1.6., 2024)

As can be seen in Table 4, the skills associated with values, especially in the 2024 curriculum, are structured to include not only conceptual but also behavioral goals. In this respect, the 2024 Curriculum exhibits an approach that links values education to

the development of observable attitudes and skills in individuals. Such a clear structuring of value-skill pairings provides significant convenience for teachers in both planning and evaluation processes. In this context, Table 4 systematically presents how and which skills the curriculum emphasize within the scope of values education. It is explanatory in terms of showing through which outcome statements the values associated with the skill areas are tried to be transferred to students. In addition, the fact that the outcome numbers are indicated allows teachers to easily find the relevant content from the Curriculum text. This structure both facilitates the guidance of teachers during the teaching process and provides an analytical framework that can be used in monitoring and evaluation studies on values.

Figure 5

*Comparison of Value-Based Skills Emphasis (2018 - 2024 Curriculum)*

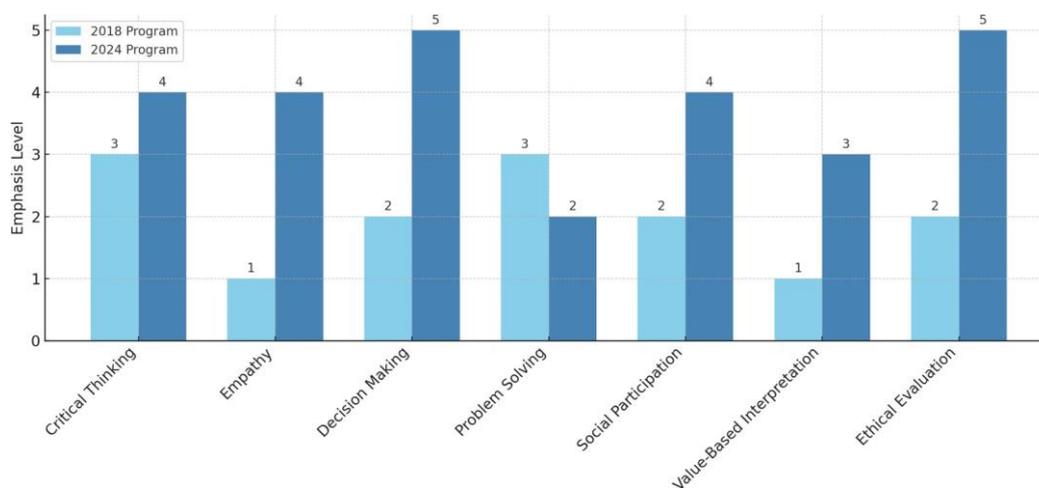


Figure 5 comparatively shows the level of emphasis on which skills are emphasized in the outcomes associated with values in the 2018 and 2024 Social Studies Curriculum. The graph lists the skill areas that are prominent in both Curriculums on the horizontal axis and presents the number of objectives that match the relevant skill on the vertical axis. The visual reveals that skills such as empathy, social participation, decision-making and ethical evaluation have a higher emphasis in the 2024 curriculum. This shows that the new curriculum, shaped by the *Maarif Model*, adopts not only a conceptual but also a behavioral and social responsibility-based approach to values education.

In the 2018 curriculum, cognitive skills such as critical thinking and problem solving are more dominant. This difference reveals the evolution of the value-skill relationship between the two curriculum and how pedagogical priorities have been restructured over time. This visual provides concrete clues as to which skills teachers should prioritize in the teaching process, as well as an opportunity for policymakers and curriculum developers to monitor the impact of the skills-based approach on Curriculums.

### **Distinctive Features of the 2024 Social Studies Curriculum in the Context of Values Education**

This sub-problem aims to examine the unique aspects of the 2024 Social Studies Curriculum regarding values education structured in line with the *Maarif Model*. This

sub-problem aims to reveal the innovative perspectives, pedagogical arrangements, and theoretical foundations of the curriculum's approach to values education. The 2024 curriculum offers a holistic structure that aims not only to help students acquire values, but also to help them internalize these values, experience them through life, and exhibit behaviors compatible with these values in social life.

The unique aspects of the curriculum can be grouped under three main headings:

**Virtue Based Structuring:** The understanding of "virtuous individual", which is the main basis of the Maarif Model, shapes the Curriculum's approach to values education. In this model, values aim to support the affective and behavioral development of students beyond their cognitive development. For example, the statement "Distinguishes what is good for oneself and others." in learning outcome 6.1.1 reflects an approach that aims to develop individual moral awareness and social responsibility.

**Life-Based Value Transmission:** The 2024 Curriculum is based on the idea that students should not only learn values but also apply them in their daily lives. Outcome 7.2.3. clearly demonstrates this approach: "Generates virtuous solutions to problems encountered in daily life." Here, an approach to values education that focuses on behavioral outcomes rather than theoretical knowledge comes to the fore.

**Thematic and Gradual Approach:** The Curriculum offers a structuring in the transfer of values according to grade levels and presents the achievements associated with virtues gradually in accordance with the developmental level of students. The statement "Evaluates the roles and responsibilities of individuals in society." in learning outcome 8.3.2 represents a pedagogical understanding based on virtuous behaviors in the interaction of the individual with society.

Table 5

*Original Structures and Outcome Examples for Values Education in the 2024 Curriculum in Line with the Education Model*

Thematic Emphasis	Description	Sample Outcome (Code)
Virtue Based Construction	Values are structured on the concepts of morality and virtue	"Distinguishes between what is good for him/herself and what is good for others." (6.1.1.)
Experiential Learning	It is aimed at applying values in the student's daily life	"Produces virtuous solutions to problems encountered in daily life." (7.2.3.)
Social Impact and Engagement	Values and Roles Adaptable to Social Life are Emphasized	"Evaluates the Roles and Responsibilities of Individuals in Society." (8.3.2.)
Observable Behaviors	Outcomes are transformed into measurable and observable attitudes	"Creates a sense of trust in social environments by showing virtuous behavior." (6.2.4.)

This structure shows that the Maarif Model aims not only to transfer values, but also to keep them alive and internalize them on a behavioral level. The 2024 Social

Studies Curriculum aims to move values education away from being a set of ideal definitions and aims to make these ideals observable in students' lives. In this respect, unlike previous curriculum, the curriculum emphasizes the living of values as much as learning them and brings originality to the curriculum.

The Table 5 presented in this sub-problem concretizes the Maarif Model's approach to values education and shows how values are treated not only as theoretical knowledge but also as a behavioral and experiential structure. The sample outcomes in Table 5 provide clear examples of how students' individual, social and moral development is supported throughout the Curriculum. This approach reflects a teaching approach that aims not only to transfer knowledge but also to guide the attitudes and behaviors that students will internalize throughout their lives.

Other examples of outcomes that support this approach include "*Develops virtuous behaviors towards problems encountered in daily life.*" (5.2.3.), "*Evaluates the responsibilities of individuals in society towards each other by empathizing.*" (6.3.2.) and "*Analyzes the virtuous attitudes of individuals in historical events.*" (7.1.4.) are also included. These outcomes show that the curriculum addresses behavioral, social, and cognitive components of values education together. Thus, students are encouraged not only to acquire knowledge but also to interpret this knowledge from a value-based perspective.

### **Discussion, Conclusion and Recommendations**

In this study, the structure and content of the 2018 and 2024 Social Studies Curriculum for values education were examined comparatively, and the approach of both curriculum to values education was analyzed comprehensively. The findings revealed that the new curriculum, which came into force in 2024 and was developed in line with the Maarif Model, contains significant structural and pedagogical differences regarding values education. These differences can be interpreted as reflecting a broader shift in how values education is conceptualized within curriculum reform processes.

In this context, it is seen that the 2018 curriculum is mostly structured on cognitive-based acquisitions and direct value transfer, while the 2024 curriculum includes experiential learning experiences and virtue-based constructs that may support students' internalization of values. The concept of "virtue", which is especially prominent in the 2024 Curriculum, reveals that education is not only a process that provides knowledge but also supports the moral development of the individual. This understanding is in line with Delors' (1996) four pillars of education: "learning to learn, learning to live together, learning by doing and learning to be". In addition, Dewey's (1938) view that education should develop through experiences is in line with the structure implemented in the 2024 Curriculum. From a transformative learning perspective, this emphasis suggests an intention to encourage students to engage with values through reflection and experience rather than through passive transmission.

Research shows that values education becomes more permanent when students meet these values in a social context, rather than through direct expression (Açıkgöz, 2021; Kaya & Akar, 2020; Keskin, 2019). In this framework, it can be suggested that the thematic acquisitions and experience-based practice areas included in the 2024 Curriculum may facilitate students' adoption of values. The gradual structuring of

values according to grade levels also coincides with Bruner's spiral Curriculum approach.

As shown in Table 2 and 5, the fact that values are mostly implicit in the 2018 curriculum and not directly associated with the outcomes may limit the visibility and explicit articulation of these values for students. On the other hand, the direct expression of values in the 2024 curriculum and their integration with the outcomes make learning more observable and measurable in accordance with the constructivist approach (Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2021).

In addition, it is seen that the conceptualizations (such as virtue, wisdom, justice) used in the 2024 Curriculum developed in line with the Maarif Model are structured through cultural references, unlike classical value education. This can be considered as an effort to establish a balance between universal values and local values. There are positive findings in the literature regarding this approach; it is argued that the cultural codes of the society in which the student lives should also be taken into consideration for value education to be successful (Thornberg, 2008). While the values in the 2018 Curriculum are mostly integrated into cognitive acquisitions and covered implicitly; in the 2024 Curriculum, values are managed as a separate theme, and original practices are designed in the Curriculum that will enable the student's individual contact with values. This positions the 2024 Curriculum as being largely aligned with current pedagogical discussions on values education.

### **Conclusion**

In line with the findings of this study, several conclusions can be drawn regarding the representation of values education in the 2018 and 2024 Social Studies curricula. While the 2018 Curriculum presents values implicitly, the 2024 Curriculum defines values more explicitly and associates them with clearly articulated learning outcomes. Within the framework of the Maarif Model, the 2024 Curriculum adopts a virtue-centered approach that seeks to integrate values into students' daily lives rather than treating them solely as abstract concepts. Furthermore, by structuring learning outcomes according to grade levels, the new Curriculum offers a value transfer strategy that is aligned with students' developmental processes. In addition, values education in the 2024 Curriculum is addressed not only within the cognitive dimension but also through affective and behavioral dimensions, which in turn supports more student-centered learning processes.

### **Recommendations**

Based on these conclusions, several recommendations can be proposed for educational practice and policy. In faculties of education, in line with the philosophy of the new Curriculum, teacher candidates could be supported through practical and experience-based teaching methods that focus on values education. In addition, values education practices should not be limited solely to textbooks and curriculum documents; guidance services, social activities, and overall school culture should also play a supportive role in reinforcing values. For in-service teachers, professional development programs could be designed to include training content that specifically addresses the values education dimension of the 2024 Curriculum. Moreover, students' processes of internalizing values should be systematically observed and evaluated; for this purpose,

assessment tools such as performance tasks and observation forms can be utilized. Finally, institutions responsible for determining educational policies may consider establishing mechanisms to monitor the long-term effects of values education and to evaluate the overall effectiveness of the Curriculum over time.

In conclusion, the 2024 Social Studies Curriculum, prepared within the framework of the Maarif Model, reveals an important transformation with the comprehensive structure and achievements it offers for values education. The curriculum is noteworthy in that it addresses the mental, emotional, and behavioral development of the individual as a whole and aims to construct values not only at the theoretical level but also at the behavioral level. However, the difficulties that may be encountered in implementation should not be ignored; it should be kept in mind that all stakeholders, from teacher training processes to school climate, should be prepared for this transformation. While the 2024 Curriculum offers a strong philosophical and pedagogical model, coordination and supportive policies are critical in the process of reflecting this model to the reality on the ground. Future empirical studies may further examine how these curricular intentions are enacted in classroom practices across different school contexts.

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#### **Statement of Responsibility**

This study was carried out by a single author.

#### **Conflict of Interest**

There is no conflict of interest in this study.

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