

PART 6

The Analysis of the Target Expectation Concepts in Social Studies Education from the Students' Point of View

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1. Introduction

It is without a doubt that education shapes the future of a country. Thus, the education system has the biggest role in this future. Exactly at this point, the answer to the question how the targets and expectations in Social Studies education should be in terms of students within the scope of education system must be given after a good consideration. Considering the general function of education, it is said to ensure the individual's compliance with the society (Gökalp, 2016:1). With the words of Plato, education is to provide the best of maturity to the person. This maturity is a process, in which the individual acquires the national and moral values of the society he lives in. Within this process, Social Studies education needs to be evaluated at a different platform. Social Studies are a step, where the individual is at a point of becoming an active and productive citizen in the society. In Social Studies course, the child finds an opportunity to know about his close and far environment he lives in, his past and future closely. Therefore, it can be said that this course has a significant function in creating and developing the social personality of the child (Can, Yaşar and Sözer, 1998: 11). Social Studies “approaches the interaction of the person with his physical and social environment within the dimension of time via interdisciplinary approach by benefiting the contents and methods of other sciences related to society and humanity and it equips individuals with basic democratic values related to the life in a globalizing world. Besides, it can be defined as a study area that aims to raise thinker and skillful democratic citizens (Doğanay, 2005: 17). Social Studies is an elementary school course that reflects the Social Studies such as history, geography, economy, sociology, anthropology,

psychology, philosophy, political science and subjects such as citizenship knowledge; includes the combination of learning fields under a unit or theme; studies the interaction of the people with their social and physical environment within the context of past, today and future; and was created with the understanding of collective education (MEB,2005:12). It is also stated that raising new generations that live in the Republic of Turkey, connected to each other with Ataturk nationalism, protect the gains of the Republic; maintain the positive aspects of our traditional values, and also ready to accept contemporary and universal values are main responsibilities of Social Studies education (Safran, 2008:15). Özdemir (2006:7) stated in his study that NCSS (1992) explained the aims of the Social Studies course as the following: being aware of the important developments experienced in the world, taking part in participation and observation activities at home and in society, gaining the skill of decision making that is suitable to democratic understanding, defining individual and cultural understanding of identity within the context of social life. In that context, when the definitions and national and universal aims in regard to the Social Studies course are analyzed, it is seen that Social Studies course prepares the students for the social life by providing them with necessary basic information, skills and attitudes and in that sense has the qualifications of a basic course. As it is widely known, the aim of Social Studies education is not only to raise democratic and good citizens but also to provide the students with basic values and skills that need to be found in the citizens (Aksu, 2015: 209). Barr, Barth and Shermis, (1977) conducted one of the first studies in regard to what the basic approaches towards Social Studies education are. In their studies, they focused on the three approaches concerning the Social Studies teaching. These approaches were Social Studies as the conveyance of citizenship, Social Studies as a social science and Social Studies as reflective research (Öztürk and Deveci, 2011:2). The aim in the approach of Social Studies as citizenship is to teach students the duty and responsibilities of citizens in a short cut. In parallel with this, the aim of Social Studies education is seen the conveyance of basic values and faiths accepted by the society to young generations (Çulha Özbaş and Erbudak, 2015:308). Social Studies as a social science are based on the assumption that gaining knowledge, skill and values of Social Studies is the best preparation for effective citizenship (Öztürk and Deveci, 2011:3). The other one is the Social Studies as reflective research field. The general aim of this approach is to help students learn to make decisions about the problems and situations that affect them (Doğanay, 2003:21). In addition to this, the aim is to provide the student with the ability to make decisions and become an effective person accordingly. In this way the students gain research abilities (Kılıçoğlu,2014: 7). While taking steps towards this direction, it is necessary to take the learning differences in children into consideration (Öztürk and Saydam, 2017:4). When Social Studies course teaches about citizenship, it will perform this with values that cannot be separated from the citizenship education together with the character education (Sönmez and Karatekin, 2017:733). In recent years it has been presented in Social Studies education reform reports that

citizenship education and human rights are the most important objectives of Social Studies education (Merey, Karatekin and Kuş, 2012: 796).

The aims within this context were reflected in the Social Studies program for the year 2005 in the following way.

In accordance with this understanding, 2005 Social Studies Program;

- ✓ Accepts that every student is a unique individual.
- ✓ Sheds light to the future lives of the students and shows awareness for the development of qualities expected from the individuals.
- ✓ Prioritizes learning and the actualization of learning by enabling the development of knowledge, concept, value and skills.
- ✓ Encourages students to think, ask questions and exchange ideas.
- ✓ Aims that the students are raised to become healthy and happy individuals physically and mentally.
- ✓ Centralizes national identity and gives importance to the adoption of universal values.
- ✓ Aims that the students develop in spiritual, ethical, social and cultural aspects within the frame of their own customs and traditions.
- ✓ Gives importance that the students are raised as individuals that know about and use their rights and fulfill their responsibilities.
- ✓ Ensures that the students have awareness towards the social problems.
- ✓ Ensures the students use their experiences and interact with their environment throughout their learning process.
- ✓ Gives importance to the variety of learning-teaching method and techniques so as to reach every student.
- ✓ Enables assessment of the learning and teaching processes within their flow of time by checking the student work files periodically (MEB, 2005:13).

12 articles given above present the aims of Social Studies course. Actually, while it is attempted to present the aims, expectations from the students are listed as well. The aims of Social Studies education also shape the aims of the individuals that will constitute our society.

With this course it can be said that the students will learn that they are individuals, they will be raised based on their qualities, knowledge, concept, skills and values, they will think and ask questions, they will learn about protecting their national identity and adopting the customs and traditions of their society, know about their rights and responsibilities, embrace the social problems, be in contact with the environment and in return the method and techniques will be used to enable student learning and throughout this process the evaluations will be conducted. The content includes the aims and the expectations from the students in accordance with these aims. In the study of (Çetin, 2016:68) it was found that when students are making sense of Social Studies they are aware of the subject fields, they gain certain knowledge, skill and values towards their individual and social developments and also acquired certain information regarding the science, technology and social change areas as part of their learning process.

1.1. General Aims of 1998 Social Studies Program

- ✓ Raises students to be dedicated to their family, country, nation, Atatürk reforms and principles and hardworking, researching, self-sacrificing, entrepreneur good persons and good citizens.
- ✓ Enables students understand that they are the children of a great nation by grasping the importance of Turkish nation in world history, honorable past and place among the nations and the services that nation provided for humanity and acquire a character that can afford any kind of sacrifice so as to actualize the ideal of the Turkish nation.
- ✓ Ensures that students know that the Republic of Turkey is a national, democratic, secular and social law state that is based on human rights; grasp the features and importance of the republican regime.
- ✓ Makes sure that the students comprehend that living as a society is a must and the concept of nation and the character of the Turkish nation; strengthen the feelings of love, respect and trust towards the Turkish nation, Turkish flag, Turkish soldier and army.
- ✓ Embraces the intelligence and talent, love of science and art, aesthetic taste and the greatness of the sense of humanity and turn these superior features into behavior.
- ✓ Treasures nation and country works above anything else and turns providing service to the country with heart and soul into a habit.

- ✓ Recognizes the important Turkish figures that contributed to our nation and humanity in history; teaches how the farsightedness, great comprehension, courage, sacrifice and heroism of the persons giving direction to the historic events in time and place impacted the flow of history.
- ✓ The students comprehend and appreciate not only the national but also the universal aspects of Mustafa Kemal Atatürk and other important Turkish figures that guided the society; they see the humanitarian duties of our nation and recognize the need for love, respect and service towards humanity.
- ✓ They understand the meaning of Turkish reform, its importance in different aspects, its impact on the welfare and happiness of Turkey and the future of this country; they are raised to become self-sacrificing Turkish children that are loyal to the values of Turkish reform, ready to protect them at all times.
- ✓ They comprehend that today's civilization is the work of a long past; they understand the service and share of Turkish nation within this civilization and thus reach to the awareness to risk any sacrifice in order to "carry our national culture beyond the level of contemporary civilization level" as per the directives of Atatürk.
- ✓ They develop the skills of thinking, researching and reasoning by comparing the causes and results of the social, economic and political events of the past with today's world so as to evaluate today better.
- ✓ They become competent enough to assume duty and responsibility anywhere, become loyal to the family integrity, develop the sense of responsibility and duty for the welfare and happiness of the family.
- ✓ They adopt the concept of law, gain the sense and habit of complying with the law and state authority.
- ✓ Recognize old, new art and cultural works around them and our national values such as museum and monuments and learn about the necessity to protect them.
- ✓ They understand that people need each other; appreciate the importance of taking part in group activities and helping others and become competent in them.
- ✓ They embrace the fact that people shoulder mutual rights and responsibilities, and understand that they have to show respect and tolerance towards their views and beliefs.

- ✓ They learn to apply the rules of working, taking responsibility, helping and making decisions together.
- ✓ They learn to arrange all their works in accordance with the rules of democratic life.
- ✓ They understand the basic principles on which the family, school and social life depend and the obligation to live as a society.
- ✓ They turn compliance with the traffic rules into habit.
- ✓ They recognize the importance of our country's place in the world, and willingly develop the sense of responsibility in the development of our country.
- ✓ They acquire general knowledge in regard to the relationship of Turkey with its close and far neighboring countries and other countries of the world.
- ✓ They learn about the geographic features of the other country and regions that the Turks live in and understand that the Turks are a great nation living in a wide area.
- ✓ They analyze the mutual impact of people on each other and the geographic environment as well as the human communities' ways of living and getting by; they are raised to become knowledgeable and effective citizens in the economic development of the country.
- ✓ They make use of plans, sketches and graphics by acquiring information about them.
- ✓ They understand the importance of environment protection for today and the upcoming years.
- ✓ They comprehend that a livable environment is a fundamental human right.
- ✓ They recognize the economic values of the immediate vicinity and the national resources and understand that protecting them is their responsibility.
- ✓ They gain the habit of using carefully and protecting their own belongings and school belongings and tools.
- ✓ They gain the habit of being thrifty and following a planned study.
- ✓ They learn about the basic information in regard to production, consumption and distribution.

- ✓ They analyze the way the human communities live and survive and learn about the economic relationships among them.
- ✓ They comprehend the meaning of tourism and especially the importance for our country.
- ✓ They understand the impact of the population growth rate on education and economy (MEB,1998).

Social Studies, taught as a course in the primary school and middle school stages in our country, try to fulfill the duties of actualizing the general aims of Turkish National Education System and reaching the aims determined as an education program (Akdağ, 2009: 3). The sentence of 34 general aims with multiple meanings was arranged as the sentence of 131 general aims with singular meaning (Koçak, 2002). In the study of Akpınar and Kaymakçı (2012), the descriptive data in regard to the general aims of 1998 Social Studies program state that the aims were citizenship (47.06%), geography (17.65%), citizenship and geography (17.65%), citizenship and history (14.71%) and history (5.88%). The general aims of 1998 Social Studies education program consist of four main parts; 1- Aims in terms of Citizenship Duties and Responsibilities, 2- Aims in terms of Relationship Among People in a Society, 3- Aims in terms of the Ability to Know the Environment, Country and World, 4- Aims in terms of Developing the Idea and Skills of Economic Living. In the context of target expectation, it can be interpreted that the aims of 1998 Social Studies program were evaluated in terms of citizenship education, which is the nature of Social Studies (Koçoğlu, 2012: 10).

General Aims of 2005 Social Studies Program

- ✓ The student recognizes his physical and emotional characteristics; interest, wish and abilities as a free individual.
- ✓ The student is raised as a citizen of the Republic of Turkey with a national consciousness that loves his homeland and nation, knows and uses his rights, fulfills his responsibilities.
- ✓ The student recognizes the place of Atatürk Principles and Reforms in social, cultural and economic development of the Republic of Turkey, and is willing to maintain the secular, democratic, national and contemporary values.
- ✓ The student knows that the rules of law bind everyone, and every person and institution is equal before the law.
- ✓ The student comprehends the fundamental elements and processes that make up of the Turkish culture and history, and accepts the necessity to protect and develop the cultural heritage that enables the creation of national consciousness.

- ✓ The student knows about the geographical features of the environment he lives in and of the world, and explains the interaction between humans and the natural environment.
- ✓ The student uses, arranges and improves the information appropriately and in various ways (map, graphic, table, globe, diagram, timeline etc.).
- ✓ The student understands the fundamental concepts of economy and comprehends the place of national economy in development and international economic relationships.
- ✓ The student recognizes the professions and believes in the importance of working in social life and in the necessity of each profession.
- ✓ The student questions the historical evidences belonging to different periods and spaces and determines the similarities among the people, objects, events and facts, and recognizes the change and continuities.
- ✓ The student comprehends the development process of science and technology and their impact on the social life and thus uses the information and communication technologies.
- ✓ The student seeks for scientific ethic in accessing, using and producing information by taking scientific thinking as basis.
- ✓ The student makes use of the fundamental concepts of Social Studies when explaining the relationships between the individual, society and state.
- ✓ The student believes in the importance of participation, and puts forth unique views for the solution of personal and social problems.
- ✓ The student comprehends the historical processes of the concepts of human rights, national sovereignty, democracy, secularity and republic and their impact of today's Turkey, and regulates his life in accordance with the democratic rules.
- ✓ The student analyzes the intersocietal political, social, cultural and economic interaction in different era and spaces.
- ✓ The student shows sensitivity towards subjects that involve his country and the world by having the awareness of being part of humanity (MEB, 2005:11).

When analyzed in the context of target and expectations, a bigger and systematic emphasis on cognitive, affective and psychomotor features were observed in 2005 Social Studies

education program in comparison to other education programs (Akpınar and Kaymakçı, 2012: 624). Social Studies provide students with the acquisition of the sense of responsibility, and the skills and behaviors for producing solutions to social problems (Aykaç, 2007:47). In line with the general aims, the targets and expectations from students via Social Studies course are listed in 17 articles. Recognition of interest, wish and abilities as an individual, raising as an individual that loves his country, nation and state, being adhered to Atatürk principles and reforms, maintaining the secular and national values, believing in the superiority of law and knowing it along with the reasons, being aware of the fundamental factors and processes that make up of Turkish culture and history, recognizing the world he lives in and knowing about the nature human interaction, being able to use the knowledge in place and time in his life, knowing about economy and professions, sensing changes and continuities belonging to different eras, contributing to science and technology and contributing to his country, evaluating the relationship between individual, society and state, believing in the importance of participation, giving importance to human rights and national sovereignty, analyzing the intersocietal events in different periods, and showing awareness towards subjects that involve his country and the world are among the expectations of 2005 Social Studies education program. Without a doubt, these expectations will be actualized in accordance with an aim. That aim in question is the nature of Social Studies education. That is to say, to raise individuals to be loyal to their country and love their nation. Therefore the Social Studies course aims make the lives of the students suitable for daily life (Gülüm and Ulusoy, 2008:114). In a study conducted by Kulaç and Uslu (2014), they reached to the conclusion that the way the Social Studies course is taught today gained general culture, taught Turkish geography to students and prepared them to the social life. With Turkish geography, the foundation for the patriotism is laid. The main source for the development and establishment of the sense of patriotism is the geography education (Aksoy, 2003). Geography gains in Social Studies education create the basis for these. Based on these ideas, the biggest responsibility of the geography teachers is to ensure the raising of patriotic citizens that will be needed by Turkey, know about, protect and develop their own values (Çifçi and Dikmenli, 2016:852). In this aspect, it is directly proportional to the general aims of Social Studies program.

General Aims of 2017 Social Studies Program

The general aims of Social Studies Course Education Program are stated in accordance with the aims and principles of Turkish National Education defined by the Basic Law of National Education numbered 1739 and are given as follows: With the Social Studies Course Education it is aimed:

- ✓ to raise individuals who love and always elevate their homeland and nation; who are aware of their rights and use them, who fulfill their responsibilities and have national consciousness as citizens of the Republic of Turkey,

- ✓ to recognize the place of Atatürk principles and reforms in the social, cultural and economic development of the Republic of Turkey, and willing to maintain the democratic, secular, national and contemporary values,
- ✓ to recognize that the rule of law binds everyone, every person and institution is equal before the law,
- ✓ to accept the need for protecting and developing the cultural heritage that make up of the national consciousness by comprehending the fundamental factors and processes that create the Turkish culture and history,
- ✓ to recognize the geographic features of the environment he lives in and of the world and to explain the interaction between humans and environment, and to develop their ability to recognize the space,
- ✓ to recognize the limitation of the natural environment and resources, to try to protect the natural resources within the environmental sensitivity, and to have an understanding of sustainable environment,
- ✓ to have the ability of thinking critically as individuals that know about accessing correct and reliable information,
- ✓ to comprehend the basic concepts of economy and the place of national economy in development and international economic relationships,
- ✓ to believe in the importance of working in social life and in the necessity and integrity of every profession,
- ✓ to question the historical evidences of different periods and places and to determine similarities and differences among the people, objects, events and facts, to recognize the change and continuities,
- ✓ to comprehend the development process of science and technology and their impact on the social life and thus use the information and communication technologies with awareness,
- ✓ to seek for scientific ethic in accessing, using and producing information by taking scientific thinking as basis,
- ✓ to be able to use basic communication skills as well as the fundamental concepts and methods of Social Studies so as to regulate the social relationship and the problems they encounter,

- ✓ to believe in the importance of participation, to put forth unique views for the solution of personal and social problems,
- ✓ to comprehend the historical processes of the concepts of human rights, national sovereignty, democracy, secularity and republic and their impact on today's Turkey and to regulate their lives in accordance with the democratic rules,
- ✓ to know the importance and ways of becoming a virtuous person by taking national and moral values as basis and adopting the universal values,
- ✓ to show sensitivity towards subjects that involve their country and the world by having the awareness of being part of humanity,
- ✓ to recognize their interest, wish and abilities and physical emotional characteristics as an independent individual (MEB, 2017:5).

Results

The general aims stated for 2005 Social Studies program with 17 articles were listed as 18 articles in 2017 Social Studies program. In the context of target and expectations, it is aimed for students via 2017 Social Studies program to become individuals that love their homeland, and nation with national consciousness, to comprehend the importance of Atatürk principles and reforms, to believe in the superiority of the rule of law, to understand the factors that make up of Turkish culture, to recognize the environment they live in and the world, to comprehend the limitations of natural resources, to know how to access correct and reliable information, to grasp the importance of national economy by knowing the fundamental concepts of economy, to have the awareness of work life and profession, to question the historical evidences in different era and spaces, to use the information and communication technology with awareness, to give importance to scientific ethic in using information, to use Social Studies concepts in social relationships, to adopt human rights, national sovereignty and democracy and apply them in their lives today, to adopt national and moral values, to be sensitive towards issues involving our country and the world, to be aware of physical and emotional characteristics as well as interests and wishes as free individuals. These aims were created in accordance with the targets of educating the young generations that are the future of our country as individuals that are committed to their homeland and nation. It is necessary for these target and expectations to be considered thoroughly by the students.

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