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### To cite this article:

Saglam, M. & Akman, O. (2023). Social studies teachers' views on the Turkish education system: Current problems and suggested solutions. *International Journal of Research in Education and Science (IJRES)*, 9(2), 407-427. <https://doi.org/10.46328/ijres.3153>

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## Social Studies Teachers' Views on the Turkish Education System: Current Problems and Suggested Solutions

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### Article Info

#### Article History

Received:

09 November 2022

Accepted:

18 March 2023

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#### Keywords

Social studies

Problems

Textbook

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### Abstract

This study aims to determine the current problems related to social studies education from the perspective of social studies teachers. The research was designed with content analysis technique, one of the qualitative research methods. The study group of the research consisted of 50 social studies teachers working in secondary schools in the center of Mardin province. The data were collected using a semi-structured interview form. The data obtained were first subjected to a descriptive analysis in accordance with the content analysis technique. Codes and categories were created. According to the results obtained from the research, it is seen that the school directly affects the student's readiness and intrinsic motivation. In addition, the genetic and mental state of the child, how the parents guide the child, the financial conditions in which the child lives are directly proportional to his/her education, and the environment in which the student grows up are directly effective in the success of the student. When the opinions of the teachers about the social studies textbooks are analyzed, the majority of them stated that the textbooks are not printed in high quality. In addition, teachers who were satisfied with the textbooks stated that the book contains basic information, that the visuals in the book are in a way to guide the students, that the coloring is good, that it is the best book on the market, especially for the sixth grade, that the texts and topics in the book complement each other, that it is suitable for the age level of the students, and most importantly, that it makes a great contribution to the developmental process of the students in a positive sense. The research was concluded with suggestions such as organizing all stakeholders in education, strengthening the infrastructure of schools according to the curriculum and making all schools equal in this sense, providing financial support to schools and opening study classes in schools.

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### Introduction

In the 1921 Education Congress, the scope of social studies was expanded. On March 3, 1924, a model created by the Ministry of National Education was adopted with the Law on Unity of Teaching enacted in 1924. While education in the Ottoman period was concerned with raising citizens loyal to the state, the 1924 constitution designed an education model based on science that recognized the rights and responsibilities of the individual. In

1926, the aim was to raise citizens loyal to the homeland. Madrasas were closed and courses were added according to fields. It was aimed to create a system that would meet the needs of the day. Throughout its history, the Turkish education system has tried to prepare individuals for life. However, with the 1924 law, it is seen that this attitude was moved away from what it was. One of the main problems was that the curricula were molded in certain ways. In order to overcome these problems, schools should be given the opportunity to provide their own curricula, or a flexible curriculum should be implemented. Indeed, teaching the same curriculum across the country would cover up existing differences and a small mistake here would have a direct impact on many people. The transfer of education through schools as if it were a military discipline, the transfer of academic knowledge, the acceptance of Turkish as the language of education, compulsory education, the financial burden on the state due to the state-supported education, the state's school employment problem, and teachers falling behind their performance were some of the problems that arouse (Açıklın, 2011; Akpınar & Kaymakçı, 2012, pp.606-607; Aslan, 2016; Çankaya, 2007; Erk, 2009; Yıldız, 2008, p.16; Ambarlı, 2010, p.4; Polat, 2012; Aydemir, 2015, p.13; Özkan, 2020; Doğanay, 2008; Akyüz, 2012, p.2; Sönmez, 2019).

In 1926, John Dewey changed the philosophy of education and introduced the biggest pedagogical development of the period. The needs of society and national goals were intended to be met through the life sciences course. The 1936 program was dominated by an ideological perspective compared to the previous program (Aktan, 2006, pp.69-79; Ünal & Ünal, 2010, pp.111-112). In 1948, with the Turkish Language Revolution, foreign words were removed from the language, simplifying the lessons, and making a few changes. The striking aspects of the 1948 program were that it directed students to research and analysis, was teacher-centered, conveyed information about social life, and at some points, constructivist education was seen in terms of students learning by doing and experiencing rather than memorization (Çatak, 2015, pp.74-77).

After the 1960 revolution, a new curriculum was drafted in 1962. With the 1962 draft, it was determined for the first time that the social studies course would be taught at the first and second levels. While the 1962 program design had a unity in each section separately, when it was put into practice in 1968, disciplines were integrated. In 1970 and 1980, new programs were introduced. In 1981, the Ministry of National Education added a Turkish Revolution History and Kemalism course in the eighth grade. The 1980 military coup was reflected in the 1985 program. With a single disciplinary approach, the courses in social studies were changed from national history, national history and civics in 1992, national history and civics in 1993, and social studies at the first level was abolished in 1992.

From the 1963 program to the 2004 program, John Dewey's progressivism dominated the curriculum and there were no major changes in terms of purpose and content. In 1997-1998, the courses were merged again, and the social studies course was started to be taught as a single discipline. On 16th August, 1997, primary and secondary schools were merged and renamed as primary education. With the February 28th process, eight years of compulsory education was introduced in 1998. The scope of the social studies course was expanded, and subjects related to disciplines such as economics and sociology began to be covered. In this program, it was found that there were problems in integrating transitions between disciplines and the 1998 program was not related to daily life. In 2002, the graduation of the first social studies teachers from faculties of education was one of the important

developments of the period. However, the most important problems of this period were teachers' insufficient knowledge of the curriculum and the incompatibility of the textbook with the curriculum. Developments in the world, the EU harmonization process and the increase in academic research in the field led to a program change in 2005. A transition was made to constructivist education with an interdisciplinary approach. The program became achievement-oriented and included concepts, skills, and values. An understanding based on the student, where each individual was different, was dominant. When the program is examined, it resembles the curriculum of the US National Council for Social Studies in 1994. With the 2012 program, the 4+4+4 system came into force. Thus, compulsory education increased to 12 years. Within the scope of social studies, media literacy, law, folk culture, and current issues in our city were emphasized. The 2012 program was formed by transferring the US social studies program as it was, which the biggest problem of the period was. As a matter of fact, the needs of society were ignored (Akpınar & Kaymakçı, 2012; Doğanay 2008; Alabaş & Kamer, 2007; Alataş, 2008; Aykaç, 2007, p.48; Çetin, 2008; Ersoy & Kaya, 2009, p.72; Gömleksiz & Bulut, 2006; Güngördü, 2002, pp.394-396; Kavak, 2007, p.4 ; Öztürk & Dilek, 2004; Sağdıç, 2019, pp.396-400; Şiraz, 2020, p.3; Tarman, 2011; Yalçın & Akhan, 2019, pp.843-844; Yıldız, 2008, p.16; YÖK, 1998; Zayimoğlu, 2011, p.20; Başdemir, 2012; Tuğluoğlu & Tunç, 2010; Altınöz, 2008, pp.1-15; Çatak, 2015).

Atatürk aimed to make the Turkish education system national, science-oriented, applicable, and secular. This goal has not been fully achieved due to the fact that rote learning is at the forefront in schools, the inputs and outputs of education do not match, the needs of society are ignored, and the system is politically oriented, centralized and result-oriented (Onur, 1994). Education policies are shaped according to the governments, and individuals are made to think in line with certain patterns, especially in the way they dress, giving the impression of a military order. It is aimed to raise a generation that obeys all the rules of the state. The best example of this situation is the views of the governments that established and abolished the Village Institutes. The systems of other countries were constantly introduced without considering the needs of the country (Şimşek, 2012, p.226-243). When they tried to implement these education systems in the existing schools in the country, many problems emerged such as the physical structures of the schools, the problems faced by teachers and administrators unfamiliar with the program, exams, and class size (Abu, Bacanak and Gökdere 2016, pp.289-290).

This study is important in terms of its contribution to revealing the problems encountered in the continuous change of the curriculum, inadequate course hours, factors affecting student achievement, parents' attitudes towards the course, and suggestions for solutions to problems such as course hours.

The aim of this study was to determine the current problems related to social studies education from the perspective of social studies teachers. In line with this purpose, answers to the following sub-problems were sought.

- What are the factors affecting students' success?
- What are students'/teachers'? Evaluations about textbooks in social studies?
- What is the role of parental attitude on students' success?
- How are the problems of constantly changing course hours reflected? in the curriculum?
- How is the scope of the social studies course evaluated?

- How are curriculum changes evaluated?
- What are the evaluation and problems between exams and success?
- What is the evaluation of the relationship between teaching the course and students' success?

## Method

### Design of Research

In this study on the problems and solution suggestions of social studies teachers, opinion taking, one of the common uses of qualitative research, was used (Gönenç & Açıklan 2017, p.28; Baltacı, 2019, p.368). Content analysis was applied to the data obtained through the interviews. Organizing and classifying the data obtained and reaching conclusions is called content analysis (Cohen, Manion, & Morrison, 2007). Content analysis aims to present the general trends and opinions in the research descriptively (Van Dijk, 1997; Gür, 2013). The aim of this analysis is to transform similar findings into concepts and categories and to present an understandable interpretation to the reader (Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2013).

The interview recordings were listened to and written one by one in Microsoft Word 2010 program. Teachers' opinions were read, certain themes were created and coded by content analysis. While creating the codes, it was tried to use the speeches of the teachers. Similar codes were combined and merged into a single category. Each teacher was given a number + t code such as It because of the multiplicity of numbers.

### Working Group

This study was conducted with 50 social studies teachers working in primary schools in the center and rural areas of Mardin, affiliated to the Ministry of National Education, selected on the basis of accessibility. Information about the descriptive characteristics of the teachers in the study is presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Characteristics of the Teachers Participating in the Study

Category	f
<b>Gender</b>	
Female	7
Male	43
<b>Working Seniority</b>	
1-20 years	45
21-30 years	5
<b>Place of Assignment</b>	
Center	49
Countryside	1

As seen in Table 1, 7 of the interviewed teachers were female and 43 were male. The professional seniority of most of the teachers is between 1-20. Almost all the teachers work in the center.

### **Data Collection Tool and Collection of Data**

The data were collected using a semi-structured interview form. Voluntariness was taken into consideration during data collection. The study was conducted with 50 people. Interviews were conducted with a semi-structured interview form developed by the researcher. While preparing the semi-structured interview form, the opinions of three experts (two social studies education experts and one Turkish education expert) were taken. Semi-structured interviews are a type of interview that allows for in-depth examination of the relevant topic while asking fixed questions (Büyüköztürk et al., 2019, p. 159). In these interview forms, the order in which the questions are asked is not important; the purpose here is that it is a method developed to ensure that all dimensions of the research problem are addressed (Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2018, p. 132). Since the number of questions in the interview form related to the result of the application was high, the interview lasted one and a half hours. In addition, it was observed that a few questions were answered the same way and two questions were not clearly understood. Considering that this situation would pose a problem for the participants, the number of questions was reduced, and the finalized interview form was applied to 8 more teachers, and it was seen that these problems did not exist, and it was sent to Mardin Directorate of National Education through Gaziantep University Institute of Educational Sciences. Before the interviews were recorded, detailed information about the interview was given, and it was emphasized that they could end the interview at any time, and after their consent, the recording was started in as quiet an environment as possible. Appointments were made to contact the teachers. Interviews were audio recorded due to pandemic conditions.

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

This study was conducted with discourse analysis and content analysis, which are qualitative techniques. The reliability of the study was increased by using these two techniques together. A semi-structured interview form was used to collect data for both analyses. Experts were consulted while creating the items in this interview form. Later, the help of these experts was also consulted while making the codes and classifications of the content analysis. In the discourse analysis part of the study, the context in which the study was conducted was revealed as much as possible. Then, the interpretations and the places where they were omitted in the analysis were examined by two field experts and their consent was obtained.

### **Data Analysis**

The data obtained in this study were first subjected to a descriptive analysis in accordance with the content analysis technique. Codes and categories were created. Content analysis in qualitative research consists of the stages of classifying the data obtained and obtaining theoretical results (Cohen, Manion, & Morrison, 2007).

### **Results**

The social studies teachers' opinions on the factors affecting students' success are given in Table 2.

Table 2. Opinions on the Factors Affecting Students' Success

Category	f
<b>Student Based</b>	
Student readiness affects student success	9
Student motivation affects student success	6
Student's genetic status affects student's success	5
Student's mental state affects student's success	3
Student's awareness/consciousness affects student's success	3
The environmental conditions in which the student lives affect success	18
Student's access to technological materials affects success	7
The student's circle of friends plays an influential role in the student's success	6
<b>Family Based</b>	
Family influences student success	16
Parental interest has an impact on student success	13
The importance given by the family to education affects the success of the student	13
Home environment affects student success	10
The educational level of the family affects the success of the student	9
Family cooperation with school staff is effective in student success	5
Parental pressure has an impact on student success	5
Socio-economic conditions have an impact on student success	9
Student nutrition affects student success	3
Financial conditions affect student success	2
Spiritual conditions affect student success	2
<b>School Based</b>	
School staff has an impact on student success	16
The physical conditions of the school have an impact on student achievement	13
Smart board has an impact on student success	10
Educational equipment affects student success	7
Class size affects student success	5

Related to the category 'Environmental conditions of the student affect success', it is mentioned that

*"...it is a neighborhood that has received migration from villages, so we live in a neighborhood with a very low socio-economic status. ...when we look at the people who have gone elsewhere, to the west, we see that they have started to recover themselves in terms of success..."* 8t.

It is stated that the environment directly affects success. In the category of 'Material conditions affect the success of the student', it was stated that they had to drop out of school due to financial difficulties. 32t's opinion on this issue: *"...the economy also affects a lot. For example, we could not send our two siblings. Because of seasonal work."* 32t

Table 3. Findings Related to Textbooks

	f
I am not satisfied with the textbooks	41
Short and concise exam questions in the form of lecture notes	14
Textbooks are too dense and need to be simplified	14
Seventh grade subjects are too many and abstract	7
I am satisfied with the textbooks	5
There should be more activities	5
Textbooks are good compared to previous years	3
Updated information needs to be added	3
Teachers should be informed about constructivism in in-service training	2

The respondents in the category of 'I am not satisfied with the textbooks' emphasized that the social studies textbooks distributed by National Education wear out quickly: *"Because the books can fall apart a lot, the pages can break, there is such a problem."* 36t. The participants in the category 'You need to give information about constructivism to teachers in in-service training' stated that there should be in-service training for teachers who were raised in the education system that preceded the constructivist system. 14t's opinion: *"...newly appointed teachers can explain constructivism, but you need to give information about constructivism to old teachers in in-service training."*

Table 4. Findings Related to the Role of Parental Attitude in Students' Success

	f
Parents' attitude is important	47
Education awareness should be created	25
Socio-economic conditions	20
Cooperation with the school	19
Parents are not interested in the student	13
Family visits should be made	12
Parents are illiterate	6
Parents want their children to do what they cannot do	5
No pressure from parents	5
The child is not the parent's priority	1
Exam-oriented parents	1
I think they impose too much responsibility	1
Student coaching system	1
Necessary conditions will be met if MoNE becomes autonomous	1

In the category of 'parents' attitude is important', participant coded 6t mentioned the importance of parents on children: *"In the success of the student; I think the parents are as effective as the school and the teacher! I think that warning them, suggesting them will increase success."* 6t. In the category of 'Necessary conditions can be



provided if MoNE is autonomous', participant coded 25t stated that the inspections by MoNE are insufficient: *"The Ministry of National Education should be completely autonomous and subject to its own supervision so that when a teacher goes to the east or to the rural areas of any region, he should not feel obliged to go there."*

Table 5. Findings Related to the Relationship between Exams and Success

	f
Exams do not reflect student success	15
Exams reflect student achievement (including regular in-class exams)	9
Exams at school don't matter	6
Centralized exams fail to measure success	5
Exams at school measure success	4
School exams measure academic achievement but not emotional intelligence	4
National education should have its own ideology away from politics	1

Participant opinion coded 3t in the category of 'Exams do not reflect students' success: *"...For example, in an LGS exam, there is no information about music or painting, there is no information about physical education, maybe the child is very good at sports."* It was stated that centralized exams do not measure knowledge sufficiently. The participant in the category 'National education should have its own ideology away from politics' states that there should be a long-term goal in education.

*"National Education should have its own ideology. ...Therefore, no political body should interfere with the Ministry of National Education. The moment we can achieve this, we can raise a free individual or an individual who thinks about his/her freedom."*

Table 6. Findings related to Lesson Hours

	f
Class hours need to be increased	25
Constantly changing class hours has a negative impact due to the intense curriculum	19
Students come to class unprepared	6
I cannot adapt to class time	4
The child is not getting enough sleep	4
When class hours change, the usual curriculum changes, it becomes worse	3
Weekend class schedule can be arranged	3
Teachers on the ground need to be consulted	1
It makes more sense for teachers to arrange weekly class hours among themselves.	1

In the category of 'Lesson hours need to be increased', teacher coded 8t stated that with the reduction in lesson hours, the lesson was not taught properly, and the subjects did not catch up:

*"...the acquisition of knowledge, skills and values that should be given within the scope of this course,*

*both in the social studies course and in the history of the revolution, is insufficient in terms of weekly lesson hours. They need to reach a compromise on course hours by conducting technical studies with working groups."*

The participant coded 42t in the category 'It is more logical for teachers to arrange weekly lesson hours among themselves' states that teachers should make their own planning: *"It's a bit difficult, yes, it's really difficult, but once it's in place, this program becomes a program that can work well."*

Table 7. Findings Related to Curriculum Development

	f
I can deliver the curriculum	21
I can't keep up with the curriculum	17
Class hours need to be increased to keep up with the curriculum	15
I'm taking an additional course for the history of Turkish Revolution	10
I teach the curriculum for the sake of teaching it	9
Curriculum needs to be simplified	6
I have no intention of raising	1

In the category of 'I can catch up with the curriculum', 8t states that they give homework to students: *"...there are many times when we go through that subject without having time to watch videos and solve questions. What happens there? We send questions to the children as homework, we give it to them when they are at school."*

Participant 50t in the category of 'I do not aim to train' aims to train good people instead of conveying all the subjects:

*"I look at it in good conscience. I taught him that he can do six or seven of those subjects. ...let's say he didn't become a doctor but a pharmacist or he went to a different high school because of the question I didn't explain. I want to make sure of this; will that person be a good person when he becomes a pharmacist? If he will be a good person, I will make a profit there."*

Table 8. Findings Related to the Scope of Social Studies

	f
No problem with narrowing the scope validity	13
Spiraling interrupted by narrowing scope validity	13
I am conveying the disconnects that occur because the scope has been narrowed	6
Scope needs to be expanded	5
The scope needs to be further narrowed	4
Current issues should be added to the social studies curriculum	2
I am not interested in content validity	1
I never noticed	1
It would be more accurate to give the topics as summary information	1

Participant coded 35t in the category of 'I am not interested in the area of content validity':

*"...I do not work from the book, because I have never trusted the books of the national education...In that book, you talk about the theme in the social studies course. On the one hand, you say let's reforest our country, on the other hand, you plunder everywhere during your rule, you cut down trees. You are in conflict with each other."*

It is stated that the consistency between the practices of the power holders and the content of the books is important for the quality of education. The opinion of 26 t of the participants in the category of 'It would be better to give the topics as summarized information': *"...instead of giving a big text, they can give a text in a shorter form. ...It would be more accurate to give summary information. At least there would be no lack of concepts, no lack of topics."* It was stated that increasing the variety of subjects, increasing the subjects, and providing short information would prevent the problems related to narrowing the scope validity.

Table 9. Findings Related to the Curriculum

	f
Constantly changing the curriculum causes teachers not to have a good command of the subject	15
Constantly changing the syllabus has a negative impact on students	7
The curriculum is at least eight years	5
Only the name of the syllabus is changing	4
Constant changes in social studies curricula cause misconceptions	2
Constantly changing the syllabus negatively affects reliability	1
The syllabus should be implemented in the time period suitable for the climatic conditions of the region	1
When the syllabus changes, the specific objectives need to be the same	1
Scientific/universal topics should be added or removed from the syllabus	1
National Education either has to monitor the institutions that extract resources, or the institutions have to follow national education	1
Teachers should be given flexibility in curriculum changes	1

The opinion of 30t is given below as an example for the category of 'Constantly changing the curriculum causes teachers not to have a good command of the subject':

*'When you change some of the topics in the exam, let's say recently, the teacher may not tell the students about it, they may not be able to see it because the topic gets scattered. Because of this, the student is stunned, and the teacher is stunned, and when it comes out in the exam, the student says, 'I don't know where that came from.'* 30t.

Constant changes in the syllabus cause confusion among teachers and cause them to have problems in conveying the curriculum. Changing the subjects at different grade levels causes problems whether they are included in the scope of the exam or not. Participant coded 50t in the category of 'Teachers should be given flexibility in changing the curriculum':

*“A small virus changed the education system. It changed life. That’s how it should be, that’s how I see it. There will be a certain framework and it will be adapted to the conditions of the time according to that framework.”*

According to the above view, instead of constantly changing the curriculum, a framework should be established, and arrangements should be made according to the needs.

Table 10. Findings on the Reasons Why All These Problems Could Not Be Solved

	f
Unresolved for political reasons	18
Lack of a sustainable long-term education policy	15
Schools are physically inadequate	8
Village Institutes	4
Compulsory education	1
Need to communicate with professional groups to solve problems	1
Give us a say	1

Participants in the category of ‘It cannot be solved due to political reasons’ state that the arrangements made in the education system are usually made as a change of minister and a change of name. Participant opinion coded 22t: *“The reason why it has not been solved until today is that it has not been solved due to the policies of the state because the minister of national education does not change constantly.”* A country’s educational philosophy should be shaped by the needs of that society, regardless of political ideologies. Since the consequences of a wrong decision taken in this field, which should be taken seriously, will be realized after many years, it will be almost impossible to change the consequences. Participant coded 42t in the category ‘We should be given a say’: *“...in disruption... Please, give me a number... Then let them do that too. 'let's save this together. 'let's try to put things in place with minimum mistake’.”* Problems in the education system will be solved more easily through teachers who serve as the locomotive of the system.

## Discussion and Conclusion

When the research findings are analyzed, it is seen that the school directly affects the student's readiness and intrinsic motivation. It is also seen that the genetic and mental state of the child, how the parents guide the child, the financial conditions in which the child lives are directly proportional to his/her education, and the environment in which the student grows up are directly effective in the student's success. The student's availability of additional resources is another factor affecting success. The student's friendship relations or the level of success directly reflected on the student, the way the family raises the student, how and to what extent the family is interested in the child, the family's expectations from education (Ma, 2003), the family's level of education, the extent to which the family is in contact with the school, the burden of more responsibility than the student can handle, the need to support the student's existing capacity in social and economic terms rather than being very intelligent, the frequency and type of nutrition, and the student's not working in any job outside of school are directly effective

on the student's success. In Bronstein, Ginsburg, and Herrera's (2005) study, it was concluded that how parents treat students affects their achievement and also improves their motivation. In the present study, the results of the teacher's competence and the teacher's love for the lesson overlap with the results of Sünbül's (1996) study in which teachers' professional qualifications and their attitudes towards the lesson are effective in the success of the students. The attitude of the school staff, physical conditions of the school, educational equipment, and class size are seen as factors affecting student achievement. When the results of Çelik and Katılmış's (2010) study are examined, the results of the current study overlap with the factors affecting student achievement. However, while it was concluded that the textbooks were inadequate in terms of content and visual aspects, in the current study, it was concluded that the textbook was inadequate in terms of the exam and that additional resources were needed. Consistent with the findings of the study, Karatekin (2006) found that the majority of the 4th grade students in his study found that the lack of tools and equipment directly affected the success of the students.

When the opinions of the teachers about the social studies textbooks were analyzed, it was found that the majority of them stated that the textbooks were not printed in high quality. It has been concluded that there are spelling mistakes in the social studies textbook, the dates given are written incorrectly, the students are confused about the subject, the transitions between the subjects are sharp, the subjects are dense and abstract (Akşit, 2011; Atbaş, 2007; Karakuş et al., 2014). It is seen that the order of the subjects in the textbooks is not well organized and that there is not enough time compared to the intensity of the subjects in the book (Memişoğlu & Köylü, 2015; Çetin, 2007). It was concluded that there were few current issues in the textbooks and that the students' level of readiness, information and visual aspects were weak. The results of Akdağ (2009), Akgül (2006), Hussain (2012) and Roberts (2014) overlap with the current study. In the studies of Aykaç (2007) and Uslu (2007), it was concluded that the social studies textbook was not sufficient and that there were problems in the transfer of learning outcomes. In the current research, social studies teachers stated that the books should be simplified, current information should be dense, there should be more activities in the books, and teachers should be given in-service training on constructivist education (Arslantaş, 2006; Akdağ, 2009; Sever & Koçoğlu, 2014).

According to the results of the research, teachers who are satisfied with the textbooks state that the book contains basic information, that the visuals in the book are in a way to guide the students, that the coloring is good, that it is the best book on the market, especially for the sixth grade, that the texts and topics in the book complement each other, that it is suitable for the age level of the students, and most importantly, that it makes a great contribution to the developmental process of the students in a positive sense. The results of the study conducted by Chung (1997) show that there are problems with textbooks, but despite these problems, students use textbooks and use them because they have full confidence in the teaching function of textbooks. It is also seen that textbooks are the most important material and that they are very useful in maintaining classroom organization.

According to the results of the research, it is seen that parental attitude has an important place in student success. Similarly, Alataş's (2008) study revealed that parents' indifferent behaviors negatively affected students and students had problems in class. At the same time, it was also stated that parents should not only talk about the student's mistakes in parent-teacher conferences, but also that guidance services should be provided to parents about how to guide and support the student, and seminars should be organized to create educational awareness in

parents (Henderson & Berla, 1994; Henderson, 1988). Since the economic situation of the parents directly affects the parents' interest in the student, it is seen that parents are in a hurry to save the day, and this situation is a direct problem even for conscious parents (Çetin, 2007). It is seen that parents should cooperate with the school even if they are illiterate in order to better guide the student so that more correct steps should be taken to ensure the correct development of the student in terms of social educational success, and that family visits should be increased due to their positive contributions for both parents, students and teachers (Adams, 2002; Aydın, 2004; Burke, 2001; Chan & Chui, 1997; Comer & Haynes, 1991; Cybulski, et al. 2005; Çalık, 2007, p.126; Çayırılı, 1998; Dimmock & O'Donoghue 1997; Finders & Lewis, 1994; Glow & Sperhac, 2003; Griffiths & Prince, 2009; Oğan, 2000; Reinhartz & Beach, 2004; Rosenblatt & Peled 2002, p.349; Sanders, 2014; Sui-Chu & Willms, 1996; Tschannen & Moran, 2001, p.312). It is seen that parents generally expect a clear success from their students whom they themselves support financially. However, parents' interest in their children is much more important (Moses & Croll, 1987).

In this research, it is seen that central exams do not reflect the success of the student, but only measure success in the theoretical sense and that success is characterized in direct proportion to success in numerical sense. In Acar and Buldur's (2021) study, central exams were seen as a positive aspect in terms of having a good effect on students' studying and having a certain standard in measuring success, while teachers' problems in the application of alternative assessment and evaluation methods in the lesson were evaluated as negative results. Inclusion of more student-centered approaches for learning (such as peer feedback, collaborative learning) and assessment (such as formative assessment and peer assessment) could also lead to enhancing higher-order skills such as critical thinking, reasoning and argumentation (see Latifi et al., 2021a, 2021b, 2021c, 2023; Noroozi et al., 2012, 2018, 2020; Valero-haro et al., 2019a, 2019b, 2022). The majority of social studies teachers stated that they use the smart board effectively (Aydemir, 2012; Yeşil & Şahan, 2015) and that the question-answer method and the presentation method are the two methods they use most frequently (Berkant & Arslan, 2015). This requires incorporation of advanced technologies in education (Noroozi & Sahin, 2022a, 2022b).

When we look at the opinions of teachers about the constant change of course hours, it is seen that the reduction in course hours causes the curriculum not to catch up (Ersoy & Kaya, 2009). In addition, it is seen that teachers and students experience adaptation problems due to the constant shifting of lesson times during the changes in the weekly schedule. In this regard, it was stated that either lesson times should not be changed or when they are changed, teachers and students should be notified on Friday at the latest and the new weekly schedule should be implemented the following week. It is seen that it would be good in every aspect if the social studies course hours are reduced, and the course hours are increased due to the difficulty in completing the subjects due to the intensity of the curriculum. Sagay's (2007) study supports the current study, and it is stated that it would be more appropriate for teachers to organize the curriculum themselves.

Most of the social studies teachers stated that they were able to teach the curriculum, but they did so in order to be able to teach it. In order for the lessons to be more productive, lesson hours should be increased (Yılmaz & Tepebaşı, 2011; Ayka, 2007). In particular, it was stated that the course time for the history of the Revolution was too little and that two more hours should be added to the course and that the curriculum should be simplified.

Regarding the views on the narrowing of content validity, the majority stated that this was not a problem, while a lower level stated that the sphericity was interrupted with the narrowing of content validity. For this purpose, it was stated that the scope should be expanded, lesson hours should be increased, current issues should be included, and it is more accurate to give the subjects in summary form. Erköse (2007) concluded in his study that the scope of the social studies course was parallel to the curriculum and appropriate for the level of students.

Within the scope of the research, in line with the opinions of social studies teachers, it is concluded that the constant change of the curriculum causes teachers not to have a good command of the subject, causes confusion among practitioners, negatively affects students, causes problems in guiding students, causes misconceptions, and damages reliability. When the literature related to this part of the current study was examined, no study was found.

It is seen that the main reason why all these problems cannot be solved is based on political reasons. In Tok's (2012) study, it was concluded that the ideologies of political parties in Turkey regarding education are in line with the party they are in. It is seen that the philosophy of education is constantly changing, and that every government that comes to power shapes education in line with its own views, and this situation directs the content of education. When Usta's (2015) research results are analyzed, it is seen that the education system of a country is directly related to the political party in charge of the country. It is seen that changes in the education system directly change situations such as class hours, teacher norms, books, and exams. It is concluded that education should be separated from politics and if this is achieved, the deficiencies in the field of education will be overcome, albeit slowly (Ortaş, 2005). Another situation is that the education system should be designed in line with the innovations brought by professional groups and the world at the planning stage of education. In addition, teachers should be able to give feedback on the system and this should be taken seriously.

When the results of Yeşil and Şahan's (2015) research were examined, it was concluded that the most important problem of the Turkish Education System emerged from the mistakes made in the teacher and curriculum planning process. When the results of Başdemir's (2012) research are analyzed, it is seen that the best solution for Turkey is contract schools. With the contract school system, it is seen that the Ministry of National Education, which undertakes the entire burden of education, can alleviate its responsibility with organizations such as commercial organizations, associations, and companies. While the results of the current study concluded that different professional groups should be included in the planning phase of education, Başdemir's inclusion of stakeholders such as commercial organizations and associations in the contract school system is in parallel.

## **Recommendations**

- All stakeholders in education should be organized, schools should strengthen their infrastructure according to the curriculum and all schools should be equal in this sense.
- Financial support should be provided to schools and study classes should be established in schools.
- Students should be provided with opportunities for all-round development.
- The education system should be structured in line with the needs, in consultation with professional stakeholders.

- Teachers' opinions and suggestions for solutions should be considered in the education bill and solutions should be offered to their expectations.
- While creating the training program, the necessary information should be transferred to the practitioners at the beginning and the implementation should be started after the schools are organized.
- In future research, systems that are compatible with society, that respond to the needs of society, and where the community is at the center of the education system, such as parents, associations, companies, chambers of industry, etc., can be investigated.

## Notes

This article is derived from Merve Sağlam's master's thesis.

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