

Primary School Teachers' Opinions on the Efficacy of Social Studies Program in Value Gain

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Abstract: The principle aim of this study is to determine primary school teachers' opinions on the efficacy of social studies program in value gain. Conducted through survey model, this study involves semi-structured interviews with 25 primary school teachers working with 4th and 5th graders. According to data analyzed through descriptive analysis technique, teachers hold the opinion that students cannot convert values they learn at school into behaviors. Participants mainly state that social studies program is efficient in terms of value gain. Furthermore, teachers believe that support from families and the environment is of crucial importance for the teachability of values within the social studies program. Teachers, mostly, utilize various activities such as stories, dramas and case studies in order to gain values to students. Participants complain that values taught at school cannot be maintained in the long run due to lack of reinforcement at home.

Key words: Social Studies Program • Value Education • Value Gain

INTRODUCTION

Since students should be furnished with values throughout several courses within the primary school curriculum, especially social studies course—aiming to raise good people and responsible citizens—should focus on value education. As mentioned by NCSS [1], social studies stands as a vital course enabling students to develop perspectives over the similarities and differences they have with other people. Social studies course serves as a warm-up platform that prepares students for the world becoming more and more complicated everyday. Values are principles and criteria utilized to make decisions about the world. Thus, social studies and value education should be regarded as indispensable parts of each other.

Democracy settles down primarily through an understanding of values, rights and freedom; through gaining features of a responsible citizen; and through knowledge and culture. Gaining samples of democratic experience to young students by furnishing them with these values as early as possible is one of the major tasks of social studies course [2]. In Turkey, apart from the newly-developed-and-applied social studies instructional program, there have been no explicit remarks or examples on value education within program updates regarding primary education. Therefore, direct inclusion of value education into the new social studies instructional program may be regarded as a piece of good news in terms of raising good people and responsible citizens.

Prioritizing values within social studies course has been a debate. On the other hand, there seems to be an accord over the basic values. Values are classified across several parameters depending upon different disciplines and different parts of life; one is the ideology such as liberal, Catholic, Marxist, feminist, Protestant; others are politics, economy, law, social, moral and spiritual issues, science, religion, environment and health [3]. Following are values included in social studies

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instructional program: being fair, valuing family union, independence, peace, scientific point of view, being laborious, solidarity, sensitivity, honesty, aesthetics, tolerance, hospitality, freedom, paying attention to health, respect, love, responsibility, cleanliness, patriotism and benevolence [4]. Most of these basic values are also included within instructional programs of many countries [5].

Examining Social Studies Instructional Program 2004 reveals that there are aims and gains directly related with values within expected outcomes of the program. Moreover, the program includes some theoretical information to guide teachers about value education; and there are also some sample activities. Literature review shows that there are various types of studies concerning value education. Mostly, these studies involve results of applying newly-developed programs or models related with value education. Besides, there are some other studies investigating the levels of value gain and how they are taught to students.

Jones and Gower [6], worked on 3rd and 4th year students. In their study, value teaching program was applied for 10 weeks through discussions, readings, writings and group projects. At the end, students were found to have been positively effected, been more successful academically, developed new methods to resolve conflicts and been more polite.

Cafo and Somuncuo [7], developed and applied a model regarding value education. Results of their study revealed that there were positive changes on both students and teachers. Teachers improved their feelings of sharing, belonging to and accepting responsibilities. Students, on the other hand, displayed some other positive changes such as being honest, solving problems and increasing academic success.

Likewise, Gathercoal and Nimmo [8] applied a program within their five-year study entitled as “Judicious (Character Education) Discipline”. Analysis of data collected both quantitatively and qualitatively at a primary school through action research method yielded that students improved a lot on some social grounds such as being more respectful for others and feeling more professional.

One other study conducted by Pamuk [9] and titled “Character Education and Social Studies” focused on how compatible were the values within the renewed social studies instructional program with character education programs. According to data analysis, again collected through document study, values within the new social studies instructional program generally overlapped with the ones covered in character education programs.

Kaya *et al.* [10], conducted a study examining the coursebook sets of 4th, 5th, 6th and 7th graders in terms of their ability to actualize the values and skills included in the social studies instructional program. Semi-structured interviews were held with primary school students. Findings stated that coursebooks were not efficient in actualizing the values and skills within the frameset of social studies instructional program.

Developed in and applied since 2005-2006 educational year, social studies instructional program places importance on value education—which is a basic difference from earlier programs—and includes processes of outcome, content, learning-teaching and assessment within the limits of the program. Teachers who are the practitioners of the program can be said to be the experts who are comprehensively informed about it. Therefore, determining primary school teachers’ opinions on the efficacy of 4th and 5th grades social studies program in terms of value gain may be deemed as crucial since it can direct other studies about how activities inside and outside the classroom can be made more efficient. Besides, it is hoped that this study may contribute to developing a more effective value education; hence to creating a better world.

The principle aim of the study is to determine primary school teachers’ opinions on the efficacy of social studies program in value gain. Accordingly, answers to following questions were sought:

What are:

1. teachers’ opinions regarding students’ value gain in general?
2. teachers’ opinions concerning the efficacy of Social Studies program?
3. teachers’ opinions about teachability of values identified in Social Studies program?
4. the classroom activities teachers conduct to teach values?

5. teachers' opinions on students' gaining the values after the application of Social Studies program?
6. the problems they face in terms of value education?
7. Teachers' suggestions regarding value education within Social Studies course?

METHODS

Participants: Completed through survey model, this research made use of criterion sampling—one of purposeful sampling methods—in order to chose the participants. The principle criterion determined by the researchers was that participating teachers had to be working with 4th and 5th graders at the time of the research. 25 primary school teachers working with 4th and 5th graders at Eskisehir province during the educational year of 2005-2006 volunteered to take part in the study. Nine of them were male while the rest were female. Educational backgrounds of teachers were as follows: 10 of them graduated from a four-year college or faculty; 7 of them studied and graduated from Primary School Teacher Training Departments of Education Faculties; 4 of them completed their Bachelor's Degree through Undergraduate Degree Completion Programs; and one of them graduated from Institute of Education. Work experience of participants was as follows: 9 teachers had been working for 6-to-10 years; 7 of them had been practicing the profession for 11-to-15 years; 5 of them had been teaching for 16-to-20 years; 2 of them had been at work for 1-to-5 years; and 2 had been working as a teacher for more than 21 years.

Data Collection: In order to collect data, questions compatible with the principal aim and the research questions of the study were prepared to be used during semi-structured interviews. Subsequently, two teachers were pilot-interviewed to make necessary changes on the questions. Afterwards, real interviews with the participants were held.

Data Analysis: Descriptive analysis technique was utilized for data analysis. In terms of the reliability of the codes, the formula developed by Miles and Huberman [11], was used and the value of $R = 0,90$ was calculated. This calculation showed that the study was reliable. Frequency calculation was used for the numerical analysis of the data; and the results have been depicted on tables. Besides, direct quotations from striking remarks by the teachers have been added to the presentation of data.

FINDINGS

Findings regarding teachers' opinions on the efficacy of Social Studies Program in value gain have been classified and presented under several topics.

Teachers' Opinions on Students' Value Gain in General: Table 1 shows the frequencies of the answers given by teachers to the question "What do you think about students' value gain in general?"

As stated in Table 1, 13 of participating teachers said "Students cannot convert the values they learn at school into behaviors"; 8 of them underlined the importance of values by saying "Students' value gain is important for a nation to pursue its existence". Likewise, 5 of the teachers drew attention to school-family cooperation by stating "Value education starts within the family and develops at school". One teacher expressed his/her opinions regarding the statement "Students cannot convert the values they learn at school into behaviors" as follows:

Values that students gain are generally confined within the walls of the classroom; they can't carry them over to their daily lives... Memorization drills are highly used for Social Studies course. We tell the students that we will do an activity that is so and so, then we do that. We do not discuss about the reasons, results and feelings of people after

Table 1: Teachers' Opinions on Students' Value Gain in General

Opinions on Students' Value Gain in General	f
Value gain is more difficult than teaching on any subject	2
Students cannot convert the values they learn at school into behaviors	13
Students' value gain is important for a nation to pursue its existence	8
Value education starts within the family and develops at school	5
Students should be able to convert the attitudes they develop and what they learn about values into behaviors	4
Student's value gain is crucial for their socialization	4
Value gain during primary education plays a crucial role in the resolution of many social troubles	4
Including value education within the program is effective in terms of value gain	3
Student's value gain is crucial to become responsible individuals	3
Students should gain the values to become a better citizen	2

completing the activity. We can't help them build empathy. Students do what we tell them to, but they are not encouraged to think about the activity. They do not ask questions such as 'Is this behavior of mine fine or not? How does this behavior of mine affect the people around me and the society?' For example, we studied a unit titled 'Family and Society'. We launched a campaign during that unit. We identified the poor people, collected help from others and delivered them to the needy. Students became aware of the existence of these people around them. However, they haven't done any subsequent activity related with this one, they've never asked for my help to do something extra for these people.

Research findings indicate that teachers generally complain that students don't/can't turn the values they gain at school into behaviors. Similarly, some teachers believe that value gain is possible only when students reflect the values they gain and the attitudes they develop on their behaviors. Individuals are expected to display changes in their behaviors when they undergo an educational process. Besides, learning is defined as "relatively permanent behavior change". Therefore, an efficient value education should direct students to converting what they learn into behaviors.

Teachers' Opinions on the Efficacy of Social Studies Program in Value Gain: Table 2 reflects distribution of frequencies of the answers provided by teachers to the question "What do you think about the efficacy of Social Studies Program in terms of Value Gain?"

A close look at the data in Table 2 reveals that 15 teachers stated "It includes all the necessary values"; that 14 of them said "It is fairly efficient in terms of outcomes, activities and the explanations"; and that 12 of them mentioned "Activities provide students with the opportunity to learn by experiencing". Following is a quotation from a participating teacher regarding the item "Activities provide students with the opportunity to learn by experiencing".

The new program teaches the values to students through activities rather than directly saying 'You should love your classmate' or 'You should respect people who are different from you'. Students learn what they should by experiencing and this facilitates internalization of what is learned. In this aspect, I find the program effective.

Findings point that teachers generally find the program inclusive of all necessary values. Although all layers of society compromise about the necessity of value education, the dispute over which values should be taught still goes on. On the contrary, many countries adopted universal values as common values to be included in educational programs. Again, a majority of teachers stated that the program was efficient in terms of involving outcomes, activities and explanations concerning the values.

Table 2: Teachers' Opinions on the Efficacy of Social Studies Program in Value Gain

Opinions on the Efficacy of Social Studies Program in terms of Value Gain	f
It includes all the necessary values	15
It is fairly efficient in terms of outcomes, activities and the explanations	14
Activities provide students with the opportunity to learn by experiencing	12
Values are too many to teach	5
Distribution of values across units is properly balanced	5
The number of sample activities for each value is not adequate	4
It has practical limitations	3
It is connected with students' own lives	2
Outcomes for each value are too many to gain	2
Activities are not in order	2
Activities do not appeal to students	1
It is shallow for value education	1
Values are not presented explicitly, but implied within units	1
Including value education into the program is meaningful	1

Table 3: Teachers' Opinions on the Teachability of Values Identified in Social Studies Program

Opinions on the Teachability of Values Identified in Social Studies Program	f
a. Can be taught	
Only if support from the families and student's immediate environment is guaranteed	12
Because the values are developmentally compatible with students	3
Because the values are criteria to be a responsible citizen	3
Because the values in the program are currently alive in our society	2
If the number of values is lessened and each of them is handled thoroughly	1
Because they are building blocks of human beings	1
If the activities carry a permanent effect	1
b. Can't be taught	
Because the values taught by the families and the school are not consistent	5
Because our education system is highly based on exams	3
Because there are plenty of values	2
Because the activities are abstract	1
Because time is not enough	1

Teachers' Opinions on the Teachability of Values Identified in Social Studies Program: The frequencies of the answers provided by teachers to the question "Do you think the values identified in Social Studies Program can be taught to students? Please, explain." are displayed in Table 3.

Briefly, the answers in Table 3 indicate that 12 of participating teachers believed that "Values can be taught only if support from the families and student's immediate environment is guaranteed" while 5 of them stated that "Values cannot be taught due to inconsistencies between the values taught at school and the ones praised at home or in the environment". A teacher expressed his/her opinions about the item "Only if support from the families and the environment guaranteed by saying:

We do conduct our studies towards value gain within the limits of the program. However, we shouldn't ignore what happens outside the school. We tell them to respect each other, but they see a lot of people behaving rudely in their daily life. We tell them to love everybody and stay away from any kind of discrimination based on religion, language, race

Table 4: Classroom Activities Conducted by Teachers to Teach Values

Classroom Activities Conducted to Teach Values	f
I turn values into concrete objects through various activities (stories, drama and case study, etc.)	20
We examine and discuss daily life examples	11
We try to find out the truth through a discussion session	8
We discuss about the news on TV, newspapers, or the Net.	6
We organize trips	4
I try to make them aware of their own value system	3
I include values into other courses from time to time	3
I involve families into the activities	3
I act as a model	2
I tell about the values	2
I teach them how to observe	1
I invite experts to the classroom	1
I assign writing essays	1
I especially focus on the ones who can't learn the values.	1

and gender differences, yet they witness the fights between people and wars. Thus, what they see in real world or what they are exposed to through mass media is just the opposite of what is being taught at school. If the families and other components in the environment do not support the school, then value education becomes rather formidable to conduct.

Teachers within the scope of this study said that the values identified in Social Studies Program could only be taught if families and other elements in students' environment provided support. Likewise, participating teachers who stated that it was not possible to teach the values determined within the program pointed to the inconsistency between values taught at school and the ones practiced or praised in the family or the environment. Undoubtedly, value education starts in the family, develops at school and is maintained throughout whole lifetime. This requires the values presented by the school and the family be consistent and complementary.

Classroom Activities Conducted by Teachers to Teach Values: Table 4 shows the frequencies of the answers given by teachers to the question "What kind of activities do you conduct in the classroom in order to teach values?"

As can be seen in Table 4, 20 of the participating teachers make use of stories, dramas and games in order to convert values into concrete concepts. On the other hand, 11 of them examine examples from daily life whereas 8 of them prefer finding the truth through discussions.

A teacher who said "I turn the values into concrete concepts through several types of activities" expressed his/her opinion as follows:

We had a text about Mimar Sinan's life (Sinan the Architect) for Turkish lesson. Later, I used the same text for Social Studies course. We discussed about being fair. Mimar Sinan paid different amounts of money to the workers building Selimiye Mosque. Suleyman the Magnificent asked him the reason why he was paying much to some workers and little to some others. Mimar Sinan invited the majesty to the construction site. They observed the workers who were hammering and carving stones. They first examined the ones who were paid much. They saw that these workers were hammering more. Then, they observed the ones who were paid less and were hammering less. Mimar Sinan said "I pay them according to how much they hammer". We discussed about this with students. I asked them "What would you have done if you had been in his place? Would you have done the same" Some said they would have done the same thing as the architect while some others said they would have paid the same amount to all workers since each of them was working as much as they could. We focused on being fair and the difference between hardworking and lazy people.

Table 5: Teachers' Opinions on Students' Gaining the Values after the Application of Social Studies Program?

Opinions on Students' Gaining the Values after the Application of Social Studies Program?	f
Values are not permanent due to lack of reinforcement at home	13
Most students gain the values	7
Most students know about the values, but they can't convert them into behaviors	5
Some students gain the values, but some can't	4
They gain values such as responsibility, tolerance and respect	4
Majority of them can't gain the values	3
I don't know since I don't have any chance to observe what they do outside the school	

Table 6: Problems that Teachers Encounter in terms of Value Education

Problems Encountered during Value Education	f
Conflict between the values taught at school and the ones at home or in the environment	11
Counter-value broadcasts on TV and the Internet	10
The amount of time allocated for Social Studies Course is not adequate	9
Studying more on multiple-choice exams than value education due to placement exams	6
Families do not reinforce the values taught at school	5
Having no trips around	5
Value corruption within Turkish Society	5
Having over-populated classes	5
Teachers' guide book lack sample activities	3
Limited or no cooperation with the family and other elements in the environment	3
Struggle to correct negative values students already have	3
There is no evaluation or assessment within value education	3
Loss of national values as a result of globalization	1

Participating teachers were mostly making use of activities that would lead to concreting of values during the process of value education. Since primary school students are generally at the concrete processes level and values have sensational properties, involving different types of activities such as story, drama and case study into value education may be conceived as an effective technique in value education. Furthermore, discussions are another means used by teachers in order to teach values.

Teachers' Opinions on Students' Gaining the Values after the Application of Social Studies Program?: All the frequencies of the answers stated by teachers to the question "Do you think your students gain the values determined in Social Studies Program in the end? Can you give examples, please?" are shown in Table 5.

Data in Table 5 indicate that 13 of participating teachers provided "Values are not permanent due to lack of reinforcement at home" while 7 of them gave "Most students gain the values" as the answer to the question "Do you think your students gain the values determined in Social Studies Program in the end? Can you give examples, please?"

Moreover, 5 of the teachers who took part in the study stated that a majority of students knew about the values, but they had problems reflecting the values on their behaviors. One teacher said the following concerning the item "Values are not permanent for most students due to lack of reinforcement at home":

Generally, what's taught in the classroom stays in the classroom. These programs do not continue in students' daily lives and homes. Everything fades out as soon as the kid gets out through the school gate because the rules out there are different; even there are no rules there. A totally different thing waits for him/her at home. The families do not

model. We tell our students to love, respect and tolerate each other. Yet, at home, their families tell them to hit back if a friend of them hits them. The result is a contradiction experienced by the students.

Although participating teachers do practice the new Social Studies Program, research findings show that values cannot be kept in the long run due to inadequate or no support from families. Revisiting the research data in Table 3 fosters this finding because data show that values included in the new Social Studies Program can only be taught if support from families and other components in the environment is guaranteed.

Teachers' Opinions on the Problems They Encounter in Value Education: Frequencies of the answers provided by teachers to the question "Is there any problem you encounter in terms of value education? Please explain" are depicted in Table 6.

A close-up at the data in Table 6 yields that 11 of the teachers stated "The values taught at school and the ones at home or in the environment conflict" whereas 10 of them said "There are counter-value broadcasts on TV and the Internet" as an answer to the question "Is there any problem you encounter in terms of value education?" On the other hand, 9 teachers complained that the amount of time allocated for Social Studies Course was not enough for an effective value education.

Following is a quotation from a teacher who said "There are counter-value broadcasts on TV and the Internet"

I guess TV and the Internet are crucial problems. For example, in the classroom, we learn how to behave in society, what to do and what not to do. We learn not to take someone's stuff without permission, to be honest and to be respectful. What they watch on TV and what they learn at school are totally opposite. They hear or watch a lot of steal-and-run news and affairs between unmarried couples on News Programs; and characters in series mislead them, they are not good models for children... They spend so much time playing computer games or surfing on the Internet that they cannot socialize. Worse, these games include near-real violence and fear.

Most of the teachers who were involved in the study mentioned the conflict between the values taught at school and the ones praised and practiced at home as the biggest problem they faced in value education. Data in Table 5 fosters this finding. Furthermore, counter-value broadcasts on TV and the Internet were also listed as other problems that teachers had to struggle against in value education. Families and teachers worry about both the amount of time children spend in front of TV and computers and the content of what they either watch or play. Children who are exposed to violence and life styles that are against social and democratic values may infer false messages from what they see. Then, these messages may subsequently lead development of behaviors and/or attitudes that are opposite national and universal values. Besides, observing and interacting with other people is also critical in the formation of values. However, children isolate themselves from their society by spending many hours watching TV, playing computer games, or surfing on the Internet.

Teachers' Suggestions Regarding Value Education within Social Studies Course: Frequency distributions of the answers provided by teachers to the question "What are your suggestions regarding value education within Social Studies course?" are displayed in Table 7.

As clearly seen in Table 7, which includes teachers' answers to the question "What are your suggestions regarding value education within Social Studies course?", 15 of them said "Support from the families and the environment for value education should be granted"; 13 teachers mentioned about educational activities for teachers and families by saying

"Educational activities for both teachers and families should be designed"; and 6 of them complained about the number and effectiveness of activities by stating "Sample texts and activities within the program and teachers' books should be increased both in number and efficacy". A teacher stated the following about the educational activities for teachers and families:

Table 7: Teachers' Suggestions Regarding Value Education within Social Studies Course

Suggestions Regarding Value Education within Social Studies Course	f
Support from the families and the environment should be granted	15
Educational activities for both teachers and families should be designed	13
Sample texts and activities within the program and teachers' books should be increased both in number and efficacy	6
Consistency must be built between the program and our educational system	6
Both values and outcomes should be increased in number	5
Course duration per week should be increased	5
Value education should aim at gaining behaviors and attitudes	4
Student centered activities should prevail	3
Opportunities to learn through experiencing should be enriched	3
Schools should cooperate with NGOs	3
Classrooms should be rearranged accordingly	3
CDs related with value education should be developed	3
TV channels should free from counter-value programs	2
Children should be kept away from broadcasts that are counter-value	2
Trips should be organized	2
Technological components such as computers, projectors, and the Internet should be integrated into the classrooms	2
Activities should be designed from the immediate to the remote	1
Values should be supported in other courses as well	1
All teachers should cooperate	1
There should be an extra course on value education	1

Inclusion of value education into the new program is both different from the previous programs and new for us. Since teachers' books and guidelines are not adequate in terms of examples, we sometimes lose our way. I guess it will be very useful if scholars from colleges of education can organize seminars, conferences, and/or workshops. Even, they can design a kind of in-service training program with a practicum... I believe these will also be beneficial for families. Briefings may be conducted for families so that children can observe what they learn at school at their own homes.

Suggestions set forth by teachers regarding value education in Social Studies course can be grouped around getting support from families and designing educational activities for families. As a matter of fact, consistency between the values taught at school and the ones adopted by the families is of critical importance for the children to internalize the values presented within instructional settings and to reflect them on their own behaviors. Furthermore, families should properly reinforce the values and should be appropriate role models.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

General purpose of Social Studies education is to help individuals understand primarily themselves, then their physical and social environment and develop positive values and attitudes towards both themselves and their environment; and subsequently guide them in converting the knowledge and values into actions [5]. On the contrary, research findings have revealed that teachers' main complaint is students' failure to convert the values they learn at school into behaviors.

Teachers' opinions on the efficacy of Social Studies Program in value gain are mostly affirmative. They regard the inclusion of explanations, outcomes and activities into the Social Studies Program 2004 as a positive step in terms of value education. On the other hand, there are some other teachers who think that the number and quality of activities within the program are inadequate and that the outcomes are too many to teach.

Research results have yielded that teachers draw attention to the cooperation among school-family-and-environment in terms of teachability of values within Social Studies program. Teachers emphasize the role of family in value gain and claim that it will be easier to teach the values within Social Studies program if support from families and the environment is granted. Considering the fundamental hypotheses of social learning theory, one can say that values develop within the environment an individual lives. Likewise, Rokeach [12], states that socio-cultural environment and personality traits of an individual serve as the basis for value formation. Thus, value formation starts within family during early ages and continues to develop under the influence from the environment as the individual matures. Bal [13], underpins that it's the duty of families to start developing basic values in a child and then it is the school that takes the charge.

Teachers within the scope of this study mainly make use of activities such as dramatization and games in order to teach values within Social Studies course. Giving students opportunities to express themselves better and to dramatize events that are not likely to occur, dramatization method can be thought as a critical method in value teaching. In addition, teachers also utilize authentic materials from TV, newspapers and the Internet. Bringing daily life examples to the classroom may help students bridge the values they learn and their own lives. Possible activity types that can be used for value education are "put yourself into their shoes", "story completion", "sequencing stairs or emeralds", "thinking with six hats" and "learning through problems". As Sanchez [14] mentions, stories including various characters appeal to children and form a fruitful source for discussions over values. However, this kind of stories should be handled and presented with precious care since they draw attention to both positive and negative aspects of human life.

A majority of participants state that most students know about the values following the application of the program, but they cannot reflect them on their own behaviors due to lack of reinforcement by families. Since role models and reinforcement are of crucial importance in value education, values taught at school should be fostered by families and families themselves should be role models for students.

Children may have great difficulty in forming values if the values adopted by the educational system and the families mismatch. Therefore, cooperation between schools and families is of paramount use. Furthermore, participants have listed the following as other sources of problem in value education: counter-value broadcasts on TV and the Internet; inadequate amount of time for Social Studies course; overpopulation of classrooms.

In Turkey, primary school students take an exam called OKS on Turkish Language, Mathematics, Social Studies and Science & Technology after completion of 8-year compulsory education and before they move up to secondary level. Many families think that their children will not succeed in this exam if they don't get extra help; so they send their children to private courses after school hours. These private courses prepare students for the OKS exam. They design sort of regular trial exams before the big exam to test students' cognitive abilities. In addition, Ministry of National Education also conducts trial exams at regular intervals.

Teachers working at state schools continually hold activities that will prepare their students to these exams; in other words they mainly focus on the cognitive development of their students. One can say that gaining social-affective skills and attitudes, and/or values is generally neglected. The aforementioned exams do not include any questions concerning the values within the Social Studies program. Participants of the study have stated that they cannot spare time for values, but instead they prepare students for the exam as one of the problems they face in value education; and they say the amount of time designated for Social Studies course is not enough to work on both values and possible exam questions. That is why teachers suggest that a consistency be settled between the instructional programs and our educational system. In this regard, the OKS exam should be called off—which will free our educational system from an exam-oriented perspective—or the contents of the exams should be parallel with the program.

Most popular suggestion by the participants for the major problem of value education—which is the conflict between values taught at school and the ones in the family—is taking the support of families and other components in the environment. Moreover, teachers state that organizing educational activities like seminars and conferences for both teachers and families may also be of great help since values have recently been included into the program. Undoubtedly, in-service

training for teachers will help them to design more purposeful value education activities; and families will learn ways of reinforcing the values gained at school through seminars and other educational sessions. Furthermore, teachers have also put other suggestions forward for the development of value education in terms of outcomes and teaching-learning processes.

Following are suggestions set forth in accordance with the findings of this research:

Sample activities in Social Studies program and teachers' books should be increased and improved both in number and quality; the number of values and outcomes should be diminished; educational activities like seminars and conferences should be organized to train both teachers and families on value education; schools and families should cooperate about value education; the amount of time allocated for Social Studies course should be increased; population of classes should be lessened; various studies about value education should be conducted using both qualitative and quantitative methods.

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