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Reconceptualizing Global Citizenship in Turkish Social Studies Textbooks With a Focus on Social Justice Reconceptualisation de la citoyenneté mondiale dans les manuels d'études sociales de Turquie en mettant l'accent sur la justice sociale

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This study examines the integration of global perspectives in the social studies textbooks used in Grades 4 to 7 in Turkey using content analysis as a methodology. The analysis focuses on seven mandatory textbooks distributed across the country and the big ideas and themes reinforced as official knowledge promoted by the state. The findings reveal both strengths and weaknesses in the textbooks' content and approach to teaching about global connections. While the textbooks aim to promote global citizenship, cultural understanding, and economic relationships, they also perpetuate nationalistic perspectives, stereotypes, and biased coverage of various forms of inequality and social injustice. Failure to critically analyze diverse cultures, perpetuation of biased views, negative portrayal of Western culture, and a lack of comprehensive coverage of inequality are some of the arising issues and emerging themes identified. Additionally, the textbooks neglect explicit discussions about equity and social justice and connections to the civic engagement of citizens. These findings promote passive citizenship and underscore the need for greater attention to inclusivity, cultural understanding, and comprehensive coverage of global issues and social justice in social studies education in Turkey and beyond as it relates to international relations.

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Abstract

This study examines the integration of global perspectives in the social studies textbooks used in Grades 4 to 7 in Turkey using content analysis as a methodology. The analysis focuses on seven mandatory textbooks distributed across the country and the big ideas and themes reinforced as official knowledge promoted by the state. The findings reveal both strengths and weaknesses in the textbooks' content and approach to teaching about global connections. While the textbooks aim to promote global citizenship, cultural understanding, and economic relationships, they also perpetuate nationalistic perspectives, stereotypes, and biased coverage of various forms of inequality and social injustice. Failure to critically analyze diverse cultures, perpetuation of biased views, negative portrayal of Western culture, and a lack of comprehensive coverage of inequality are some of the arising issues and emerging themes identified. Additionally, the textbooks neglect explicit discussions about equity and social justice and connections to the civic engagement of citizens. These findings promote passive citizenship and underscore the need for greater attention to inclusivity, cultural understanding, and comprehensive coverage of global issues and social justice in social studies education in Turkey and beyond as it relates to international relations.

Résumé

Cette étude examine l'intégration des perspectives mondiales dans les manuels d'études sociales utilisés de la quatrième à la septième année en Turquie, en utilisant la méthodologie de l'analyse de contenu. Cette analyse se concentre sur sept manuels obligatoires distribués dans tout le pays ainsi que sur les grandes idées et les thèmes renforcés en tant que connaissances officielles promues par l'État. Les résultats révèlent à la fois des forces et des faiblesses dans le contenu des manuels et dans l'approche de l'enseignement de la connectivité mondiale. Alors que les manuels visent à promouvoir la citoyenneté mondiale, la compréhension culturelle et les relations économiques, ils perpétuent aussi des perspectives nationalistes, des stéréotypes et une couverture biaisée de diverses formes d'inégalité et d'injustice sociale. L'incapacité à analyser de manière critique diverses cultures, la perpétuation de points de vue biaisés, la représentation négative de toute culture occidentale et le manque de couverture globale des inégalités sont quelques-uns des problèmes et des thèmes émergents qui ont été identifiés. En outre, les manuels négligent les discussions explicites sur l'équité et la justice sociale et les liens avec l'engagement civique des citoyens. Ces constatations encouragent la citoyenneté passive et soulignent la nécessité d'accorder une plus grande attention à l'inclusion, à la compréhension culturelle et à une couverture complète des questions mondiales et de la justice sociale dans l'enseignement des sciences sociales en Turquie et au-delà, en ce qui concerne les relations internationales.

Keywords: global citizenship, social studies, textbooks, critical literacy, social justice

Mots clés : citoyenneté mondiale, études sociales, manuels d'étude, littératie critique, justice sociale

Introduction

According to the European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations (2023), Turkey currently holds the distinction of hosting the world's largest refugee population, with nearly 4 million individuals seeking refuge within its borders. Around 1,234,000 of them are between 5 to 18 years old (Directorate of Migration Management, 2022). This huge immigration causes some political and social challenges while addressing immigration and the consequent shifts in Turkey's ethnic makeup of the population. Recognizing the need to address this challenge and promote inclusivity, the Ministry of National Education of Turkey integrated global perspectives into the social studies curriculum in 2005 and 2018. These initiatives intended to create a future in which diversity is valued as a strength and the values of justice and equality are respected. Therefore, integrating global perspectives into social studies education in Turkey is essential because of the country's racially, culturally, ethnically, and religiously diverse demographics.

One of the main aims of social studies is to promote global citizenship (National Council for Social Studies, 2013; NMOE, 2018). Various scholars over the decades have indicated the importance of global citizenship, emphasizing cross-cultural understanding and global competence (Kilinc & Tarman, 2022; Rapoport, 2009). According to Merryfield (2000), schools should provide and promote global citizenship because of economic, political, environmental, and technological interconnectedness. However, promoting global citizenship is not an easy task without clarifying the global citizenship discourse about local and national needs. It is important to analyze what values and perspectives are prioritized and who it benefits and in what ways.

Social studies research, more specifically civic education has clearly transitioned towards global citizenship education, and is reflected in academic research worldwide (Gaudelli, 2016; Goren & Yemini, 2017). Many researchers indicated that schools should prepare students for an interconnected and interdependent world by providing the knowledge, skills, and attitudes for global competence (Carens, 2000; Merryfield, 2000). Global citizenship is quite a new concept in Turkey compared to the European countries, the United States, and Canada. Although extensive academic research has investigated the need for global citizenship education, much less research has explored how global citizenship is being presented in textbooks in Turkey and what values are prioritized as part of the citizenship discourse. Social studies lessons have mainly relied on these textbooks and teachers rarely go beyond these prescribed textbooks. The main purpose of this research is to investigate how global citizenship is conceptualized in Turkish social studies textbooks. Towards this aim, the researchers investigate the following research question: How is the concept of global citizenship represented in Turkish social studies textbooks in Grades 4 to 7? The researchers used a qualitative method of thematic analysis to examine how big ideas are presented in the curriculum and taught as official knowledge.

Methodology

The authors employed a qualitative approach to analyze the representation and interpretation of global citizenship in the Grades 4 to 7 social studies textbooks. According to Bowen (2009), researchers can use documents such as textbooks as a stand-alone data source. In this study, the authors used content analysis to investigate social studies textbooks. Content analysis is a method of analyzing documents. Krippendorff (2018) defined content analysis as "a research technique for making replicable and valid inferences from texts (or other meaningful matter) to the contexts of their use" (p. 18). It is also known as a method of analyzing visual, verbal, or written, communication messages (Cole 1988; Elo & Kyngäs, 2008). The main aim of the content analysis is to "provide knowledge and understanding of the phenomenon under study" (Downe-Wamboldt, 1992, p. 314).

The materials for this research consisted of seven social studies textbooks from fourth to seventh grade published or approved by the National Ministry of Education (NMOE). These textbooks were distributed by NMOE free of charge all over the country. Three of the textbooks were published by NMOE, and the remaining four textbooks were published by private publishers. These textbooks were in use during the 2022–2023 school year and associated with the social studies curriculum standards enacted in 2018. Selected textbooks were downloaded from the NMOE website and examined by the authors for reoccurring themes related to citizenship. Since these textbooks reflected the same social studies standards, the order of the chapters and main topics are identical for each grade. In each grade, there are seven learning themes: 1. individual and society, 2. culture and heritage, 3. people, place, and environment, 4. science, technology, and society, 5. production, distribution, and consumption, 6. active citizenship, 7. global connections. Table 1 shows the distribution of the social studies objectives for each theme between fourth to seventh grades.

Table 1

Social Studies Themes in Grade 4 to 7 Textbooks

Themes	Fourth Grade	Fifth Grade	Sixth Grade	Seventh Grade
Individual and Society	12 hours	14 hours	12 hours	12 hours
Culture and Heritage	14 hours	18 hours	22 hours	30 hours
People, Place, and Environment	20 hours	18 hours	14 hours	15 hours
Science, Technology, and Society	16 hours	14 hours	12 hours	12 hours
Production, Distribution, and Consumption	18 hours	18 hours	18 hours	15 hours
Active Citizenship	14 hours	12 hours	16 hours	12 hours
Global Connections	14 hours	14 hours	14 hours	12 hours
Total	108 hours	108 hours	108 hours	108 hours

Content analysis offered a robust framework for dissecting citizenship discourse within Turkish social studies school textbooks. Initially, the textbooks were meticulously scrutinized to identify recurring patterns, themes, and underlying concepts related to citizenship. These themes, once identified, underwent a rigorous coding process, enabling the extraction of key concepts, prevalent ideologies, and the nuanced representation of citizenship. Through analysis, connections between different themes were established, shedding light on the multifaceted nature of citizenship discourse. Additionally, this methodology permitted a comprehensive exploration of how concepts such as nationalism and social justice are portrayed and prioritized within the Turkish educational context, offering invaluable insights into the shaping of young minds regarding citizenship ideologies.

The School System and Social Studies as a Subject in Turkey

After the demolition of the Ottoman Empire, the Turkish Republic was proclaimed in 1923. The new regime undertook several revolutions to promote Turkish nationalism, secularism, and Westernization such as the abolishment of the Ottoman Caliphate in 1924 to separate religion from

the state, the abolishment of madrasah (Ottoman educational institutions) and subordinating all schools to the Ministry of National Education in 1924, adoption of the Latin alphabet in 1928, the abolishment of the Classic Ottoman institutions including the education system, and the renouncement of the pan-Islamist ideals (Turan, 2000).

To create a modern country, the leaders of the new republic needed new ideologies, values, and perspectives (Kazamias & Massialas, 1965). A republican version of civic nationalism was adopted to create a modern Turkey and education was used to promote Turkish identity and raise modern, nationalist citizens (Isin & Wood, 1999). For this reason, the education system of the Republic of Turkey is highly centralized (Kazamias, 1966). Over the years, the education system in Turkey has undergone a series of reforms resulting in its current structure. One significant change has been the progressive expansion of mandatory schooling years to align with the 12-year standard observed in Europe. In Turkey, the education system follows a model known as 4 + 4 + 4. This model entails that children spend 4 years in primary school and then proceed to secondary school for an additional 4 years. Finally, the last phase of education consists of 4 years in senior high school (Kilinc & Dere, 2015). The NMOE controls school curricula and all textbooks have been distributed by the NMOE to all grades from K–12 across the country.

Social studies curriculum is a part of the school curricula in elementary and middle schools from the fourth through the seventh grades in Turkey. It has been part of the school curriculum since 1968. One of the main aims of social studies as a discipline is to nurture young generations to be good citizens who are committed to the republic. This aim is clearly stated in each social studies curriculum since 1968. It is also the objective indicated in the latest curriculum revised in 2018: “As citizens of the Republic of Turkey, they should grow up as citizens who love their homeland and nation, know and use their rights, fulfill their responsibilities, and have national consciousness” (NMOE, 2018, p. 8).

Schooling aims to nurture young generations to be active citizens and to promote civic engagement. Many educators proposed that schools should also prepare students for the interconnected and interdependent world. Students should learn about their rights and responsibilities not only at the local-state level but also at the global level. Moreover, they should be aware of the impacts of their actions and how they affect others. School curricula should help them perceive the connection between their action/life and the world, especially in global issues such as poverty, pollution, and inequalities. They should also understand the concept of universal human rights and the role of international organizations. Therefore, civic engagement should be extended to a global level (Carens, 2000; Kilinc & Tarman, 2022; Langran et al., 2009). Since an individual’s daily acts affect others beyond state borders, the responsibility of promoting the global collective good and change should be included in the school curricula.

School curricula and textbooks have been used to transform and modernize Turkish society since the foundation of the republic in 1923 (Kilinc, 2013). The social studies curriculum in Turkey has historically supported nationalist ideologies. Critics argued that the curriculum’s emphasis on a nationalistic narrative might result in partial interpretations of historical events, failing to provide a comprehensive understanding of various perspectives (Acikalin, 2010; Ersoy, 2013; Günel & Pehlivan, 2015). This might cause the dissemination of prejudice and hatred, as well as the marginalization or erasure of specific ethnic, religious, or cultural communities. The normalization of these ideologies might have entailed portraying them as indisputable truths or underscoring their significance for national advancement and unity. Propaganda could have been utilized to mould public opinion and foster a widespread consensus regarding these ideologies. Ethnocentric discourse and nationalism have been the main aims of school curricula since 1923 (Aktan, 2013).

In the school curriculum, Turkish identity is emphasized through lessons on the Turkish War of Independence, national symbols such as the flag and anthem, and Turkish folktales. For example, primary school textbooks introduce students to national symbols and explain their meanings; the same textbook also includes stories about Turkish heroes and their contributions to the nation's history. In the middle school curriculum, students learn about the Ottoman Empire and its decline, followed by the establishment of the Turkish Republic. The emphasis is on the positive aspects of the new republic and its founder, Mustafa Kemal Atatürk. For example, the middle school social studies textbooks explain the reasons for the decline of the Ottoman Empire and the reforms introduced by Atatürk to modernize the country.

Discourses of Global Citizenship

The concept of citizenship is complicated, often related to a set of rights and duties to the state (Cogan, 2000; Eizadirad, 2019; Koopmans et al., 2005; Straub, 2020). Citizenship is also associated with belonging, identity, and loyalty to the nation-state (O'Byrne, 2003). Worldwide migration, technological advancement, and globalization in local and national communities challenge the traditional definition of citizenship (Banks, 2008). The idea of global citizenship dates back to Ancient Greek (Dower, 2000) where Socrates and Diogenes described themselves as citizens of the world (Bowden, 2003). However, Socrates and Diogenes had a different view of global citizenship. While Diogenes challenged citizenship of the polis by disdaining himself from the "dishonesty and hypocrisy" of his fellow citizens and declaring himself as a citizen of the world, Socrates acknowledged his citizenship of Athens but held a sense of affinity with all humanity (Heater, 2000).

Roman Stoic philosophers introduced dual citizenship that showed allegiance to the Roman state and served the world as a virtuous individual (Schattle, 2009). During the Age of Enlightenment, global citizenship was linked to universal human rights (Dower, 2000). The term was associated with global governing institutions in the first decades of the 20th century. After World War II, the United Nations was established with the hope of fostering peace, but even this model did not distribute power equally. While citizenship is explained in the context of nation-states, some scholars considered it at the global level. Nussbaum (2002a) followed the Stoic cosmopolitanism idea in her definition which advocated cultivated humanity and world citizenship rather than national citizenship. Nussbaum proposed three capacities for cultivated humanity: critical examination of oneself and one's tradition that examines all beliefs and traditions, recognizing and concerning all human beings, and empathy or imagining what it might be to be in the position of another person who is very different from oneself (Nussbaum, 2002b). She indicated that higher education should especially prepare students for the age of cultural diversity and increase internalization by promoting individual and collective self-awareness for solving global issues that increase moral obligations to the world (Schattle, 2009). Similarly, Carens (2000) expressed that one can experience multiple levels of citizenship. According to him, individuals can identify themselves as both citizens of the state and the world because they are living in a global village.

In the last 2 decades, scholars in different disciplines have provided various definitions of global citizenship. Global citizenship can be conceived in a range of forms: awareness of an interconnected world (OXFAM, 2022), mindset and attitudes (Golmohamad, 2008), concerning rights and welfare of others (Ladson-Billings, 2005), responsibility for solving global issues (Carabain et al., 2012; Dower, 2002), developing empathy (Schattle, 2008), active participation in the local and global society (Nanackchand & Berman, 2012), knowledge of other cultures (Veugelers, 2011), holding multiple identities (Isin & Wood, 1999), flourishing a "cosmopolitan

ethic” overcoming self-interest (Gabay, 2008), promoting human rights (Abdi & Shultz, 2008), mutual respect, human dignity, and ecological sustainability (Waddock & Smith, 2000), respecting the rights of others (De Ruyter & Spiecker, 2008), showing genuine empathy and advocating solidarity with all peoples (Marshall, 2007), growing interdependency and interconnectedness between countries in economic, cultural, and social areas (Lee & Fouts, 2005), being open minded (Hunter, 2004), and interconnectedness and global competencies (Kilinc & Tarman, 2022).

Moreover, some scholars provided a critical approach to global citizenship education and examined how global citizenship associates with marginalized and underrepresented groups. The concepts of power, voice, inequities, and diversity hold significant importance in critical citizenship education (Andreotti, 2006). For instance, Oxley and Morris (2013, p. 313) linked critical global citizenship with a postcolonial agenda, highlighting the importance of questions and issues surrounding inequalities and various forms of oppression. Their emphasis is on fostering a critical stance that challenges existing inequitable power structures and strives to dismantle oppressive global systems. This critical perspective on global citizenship is dedicated to promoting social justice, environmental sustainability, and fostering critical examination of our own perspectives and assumptions (Bosio, 2023; Giroux & Bosio, 2020). It draws upon the insights of critical pedagogy, viewing education as a means of liberation, “conscientization” as a profound comprehension of the world, and critical reflection as a fundamental aspect of advancing justice and democracy globally (Giroux & Bosio, 2020).

In this article, the authors align with Andreotti’s (2006) perspective that critical literacy goes beyond merely revealing an absolute “truth” to learners. Instead, it involves creating and cultivating spaces to contemplate context and examine self as well as others’ epistemological and ontological assumptions. This encompasses an exploration of the factors influencing how we think, exist, feel, and behave, along with the consequences of our belief systems within local and global contexts concerning power dynamics, social relationships, and the allocation of labour and resources.

Global Citizenship Ideologies in Curriculum Textbooks in Turkey

In this study, the authors analyze seven mandatory social studies textbooks designed for students in Grades 4 to 7. These textbooks have been published or approved by the NMOE and distributed free of charge across the country. Given their crucial role in educational practice, these textbooks are expected to be uniformly implemented across all schools and utilized in a standardized manner within classrooms.

Global citizenship is a relatively new concept for the Turkish social studies curriculum, even though it has been included in the social studies curriculum more commonly and for longer periods in the United States, Canada, and the United Kingdom. The global citizenship education movement had an impact on the 2005 Turkish social studies curriculum. A new learning theme called “global connections” was included in the social studies curriculum. This learning theme consisted of four units: Our country and the World, Bridges between Countries, My Far-away Friends, and Our World (MEB, 2005a, 2005b). These units introduce global connections and issues from Grades 4 to 7 (Acikalin, 2010). The Turkish social studies curriculum has been updated in 2018 and the “global connections” theme continues to be part of the curriculum. In the latest social studies curriculum, global citizenship was indicated in the aims of the curriculum: “To show sensitivity to issues that concern their country and the world” (NMOE, 2018, p. 8). According to the social studies curriculum, technological developments flourish interconnectedness and promote cultural, political, and economic interactions and collaborations. Therefore, the latest social studies curriculum emphasize that students should be aware of interconnectedness and global issues.

Fourth-Grade Social Studies Textbook

The fourth-grade social studies textbook introduces the theme of “global connections” by briefly discussing Finland and Jordan. However, the information provided lacks depth and detail. The textbook also examines Turkey’s neighbouring countries and their economic relationships, but it only presents information without encouraging critical analysis. Unfortunately, the textbook promotes a nationalistic perspective by highlighting Turkic countries worldwide and the activities of Turkish institutions, reflecting the influence of nationalistic ideologies.

The Turkish Cooperation and Coordination Agency (TIKA), established in 1992, has two significant objectives. The first is to provide support to neighbouring countries of Turkey where Turkish is spoken and to developing countries. The second objective is to strengthen Turkey’s collaboration with these countries by developing projects in economic, commercial, technical, social, cultural, and educational domains. (Fourth-Grade Social Studies Textbook, 2019, p. 183)

Despite the expectation that this chapter would encourage global citizenship, it promotes a nationalistic perspective by providing information about other Turkic countries worldwide, particularly in Central Asia. Additionally, the textbook explores the role of institutions such as TIKA and the Turks Abroad and Related Communities Presidency (YTB) in fostering closer ties between Turkey and other Turkic nations. The fourth-grade social studies textbook provides an overview of Turkic countries and then goes on to highlight the activities of TIKA and YTB in these nations. This approach reflects the influence of nationalistic perspectives on the textbook. These agencies promote the notion of a shared identity as one nation of Turks. This objective is explicitly stated on the TIKA (2023) website:

Turkey and the countries in Central Asia consider themselves as one nation containing different countries, and our foreign politics displayed a multilateral and proactive understanding of the region. Our relations with the Turkish-speaking countries have become a permanent focus for Turkey and this focus gained in importance in the most recent 20 years of global politics. (p. 1)

The curriculum’s third objective involves comparing the cultural elements of different countries with those of Turkey, focusing on Hungary and Japan. The textbook emphasizes tourism and its role in fostering international relationships, as well as highlighting similarities between Hungarian and Turkish languages. While the aim is to promote respect for different cultures, the textbook perpetuates stereotypes by associating certain characteristics with specific groups. Inappropriate images and descriptions contribute to the development of stereotypes in students’ minds, undermining the goal of encouraging respect and understanding. For instance, the textbook mentions that some Arabs eat rice with their hands instead of using a fork and/or a spoon and describes this as their tradition. Such descriptions can create a stereotype in students’ imaginations. It also does not discuss incidents both nationally or internationally where Turkey has been accused of violating human rights and enacting violence on its citizens.

The final section of the textbook emphasizes the significance of recognizing and embracing diversity as a fundamental aspect of global citizenship. It promotes respect for inherent differences among people to reduce hostility and prejudice. The primary focus of the fourth-grade social studies textbook is on cultural global citizenship, aiming to foster students’ openness to different cultures and their willingness to learn about them. However, it falls short of providing comprehensive information and critical analysis, but rather, it perpetuates stereotypes that hinder the goal of promoting respect and understanding.

Fifth-Grade Social Studies Textbooks

Two different textbooks have been approved by the NMOE as social studies textbooks for the fifth grade, with similar titles under the global connection theme: *Global Relations Network* and *Global Interaction*. The first objective of the curriculum is to research the role of the student's place of living and the environment in the economic relations between Turkey and other countries. Both textbooks provide examples of economic activities in various cities that contribute to Turkey's economy and trade relationships with other countries. These examples primarily revolve around export products such as textiles and agricultural products, and tourism.

Both fifth-grade social studies textbooks highlight the significance of transportation in trade and economic activities. As Turkey mainly exports agricultural products, the textbooks explain the role of safe and efficient transportation through relevant examples. They emphasize that secure and fast transportation ensures that products reach their destination without any damage or spoilage, thus increasing the importance of transportation technologies in international trade. The concept of E-trade is introduced as a new phenomenon, with both textbooks explaining what it means and its impact on international trade. Although the information provided on E-trade is insufficient, including this term in social studies textbooks is a crucial step in highlighting technology and interconnectedness:

The facilitation of international economic relations has been as influenced by communication technologies as by transportation. In the past, obtaining desired information was not easy. Nowadays, there are numerous communication tools such as telephones and the Internet (Visual 7.10). Besides communication, the tools we use today play a significant role in international trade. Through these tools, we can discover which country and company produce the product we need. This system, known as electronic commerce, enables us to contact producers in different countries at any time. We can easily communicate with them and conduct trade. With the help of the Internet, we can resolve transportation issues and track the product's journey during shipment. (Fifth-Grade Social Studies Textbook, 2019, p. 175)

The fifth-grade social studies textbooks highlight the importance of tourism in promoting cultural interactions and diversity in international relations. They use Internet news to illustrate how tourism can foster bonds between different cultures. However, nationalistic views are also presented in the textbooks. For example, one of the textbooks uses an Internet news article about an English tourist who became a resident in Bodrum, Turkey, after visiting the country and enjoying the Turkish lifestyle. The article praises Turkish culture and traditions, which perpetuates a biased and one-sided view of cultural interactions:

Nature, people, food, everything is very beautiful. Here we can live our own beliefs very comfortably. We also respect the beliefs of Turks. They also respect our beliefs. Living in our own country is stressful. We live here in a free environment, and we are very happy. The Turkish foods are very good. Also, this is a very cheap country to live in, compared to our own country. We love and respect Turkish customs and traditions. Here, we witnessed how much families take care of their children. We especially like this situation. Families are very close to each other. (Fifth Grade Social Studies Textbook, 2019, p. 179)

Sixth-Grade Social Studies Textbooks

Two different textbooks have been approved by NMOE for sixth-grade social studies with the same title for the global connection theme which is *International Relations*. The first objective of the sixth-grade social studies curriculum is to examine the cultural, social, political, and economic relationships between our country (Turkey) and the Turkic Republics and neighbouring states. The government textbook provides an explanation of Atatürk's national foreign policy principles for

Image 2

Examples of TİKA's Operations From the Sixth-Grade Social Studies Textbook



Turkey's military power is also indicated in both textbooks. According to these textbooks, The Turkish Armed Forces (TSK), which consists of land, air, and naval forces is an important power in the world:

Turkey, which has a strong army, is the guarantor of peace and tranquility in the lands it dominates. Using its military and political power, Turkey plays an active role in solving the problems in the Middle East, the Balkans, and the Caucasus. (Sixth-Grade Social Studies Textbook, 2019, p. 251)

The examination of the influence of popular culture on Turkish culture is the final topic covered in both textbooks. The textbooks point out that popular culture has been accused of eroding Turkish culture by promoting a lifestyle that is not acceptable. The influence of the Western lifestyle through TV series and movies is particularly emphasized. The textbooks claim that popular culture has a negative impact on Turkish culture, and they encourage students to take steps to preserve Turkish culture:

Today, listening to pop, hip-hop, and rap music has become widespread among our people through the media. This type of music has also affected people's understanding of the game over time. Especially among the young people, the dances of this music started to attract attention. It should not be forgotten that the mentioned elements have spread to the world under the influence of popular culture and do not belong to our own culture. (Sixth-Grade Social Studies Textbook, 2019, p. 255)

Nationalistic views heavily influence the exploration of popular culture, resulting in a negative depiction of Western lifestyle and its effects on Turkish culture. As evident from the quote above, the act of listening to pop, rap, and hip-hop music is perceived as a potential threat to Turkish culture.

Seventh-Grade Social Studies Textbooks

Two textbooks have been published by the government and a private publisher for the seventh grade. Both textbooks provide a brief introduction to international organizations of which Turkey is a member, this includes the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), United Nations (UN), United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), World Health

Organization (WHO), and the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC). The textbooks provide information on when these organizations were established and their primary objectives:

Our rooted heritage of civilization and the experiences we have gained from history serve as a guide in international relations. The historical and cultural legacy inherited by our country contributes to adopting a peace-oriented approach in foreign relations. Turkey has always fostered relationships based on respect and trust with different cultures worldwide. The resolution of global issues can only be achieved through the collaboration and unity of nations. As a pioneer in establishing enduring global peace, our country has taken on international roles to develop common values. Additionally, Turkey has emerged as a leading figure in world politics through its relationships with other countries and its membership in international organizations. (Seventh-Grade Social Studies Textbook, 2019, p. 204)

The seventh-grade social studies textbooks in Turkey also examine the economic regions and institutions that Turkey has relations with, such as the G20, D8, Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), and Asia Cooperation Dialogue (ACD). Additionally, the textbooks address stereotypes about different cultures and how they can create issues in living together in harmony. Examples of stereotypes about Indigenous Peoples of North America, Finland, Kenya, and India are provided to illustrate this point. Furthermore, the textbooks examine stereotypes about the culture of democracy and give an example of the caste system:

The caste system has been an integral part of Hindu culture and social structure for centuries. This system causes rifts in society in terms of individual and social rights and freedoms, but since it is based on religious foundations and is a part of Hindu culture, it continues to exist without facing any serious reaction. As it is seen, there is no social equality all over the world. (Seventh-Grade Social Studies Textbook, 2019, P. 212)

While economic and social inequalities have been the subject of discussion in Turkey in recent decades (Duman, 2010; Kirmanoğlu & Başlevent, 2014; Özpınar & Akdede, 2022), the social studies textbook only provides the Indian caste system as an example of inequality. The textbook does not address various forms of inequality in Turkey such as those related to gender, ethnicity, religion, LGBTQ2S+, economic status, or politics. The textbooks also explore global issues and their potential solutions. They highlight natural disasters, such as earthquakes, tsunamis, volcanoes, and global climate change as examples of such issues. The chapter ends by discussing hunger, terrorism, and migration.

Critical Analysis of Ideologies Normalized in the Social Studies Curriculum Textbooks

The analysis of the fourth, fifth, sixth, and seventh-grade social studies textbooks in Turkey reveals several strengths and weaknesses in their content and approach to global connections. Overall, the textbooks aim to promote global citizenship, cultural understanding, and economic relationships. However, certain issues arise, such as the promotion of nationalistic perspectives, the perpetuation of stereotypes, and limited coverage of various forms of inequality and systemic oppression within the country perpetuated by the state.

In the fourth-grade social studies textbook, the introduction of Finland, Jordan, and neighbouring countries is superficial and lacks critical analysis. Additionally, the textbook promotes a nationalistic perspective by emphasizing Turkey's relations with other Turkic nations. Stereotypes are perpetuated through inappropriate descriptions and images which can lead to the development of biased views among students. Nonetheless, the textbook does emphasize the significance of recognizing and embracing diversity as a fundamental aspect of global citizenship. The result of this study reveals that the textbooks primarily associate cultural differences with

geographic distinctions, but they offer minimal coverage of ethnic and religious differences on both national and global scales. While the textbooks acknowledge the importance of respecting and tolerating diverse cultures at these levels, they fall short of providing clear explanations of these differences. In her research, Ersoy (2013) emphasized that social studies textbooks in Turkey tend to adopt a predominantly national perspective, and these textbooks still fall short of adequately emphasizing the importance of respecting diversity and promoting activism for social justice locally, nationally, or internationally. Similarly, Sayılan (2009) argued that textbooks often detach diversity from its broader context and narrow it down to learning styles and psychological states, neglecting the importance of cultural diversity.

The fifth-grade social studies textbooks aim to explore the role of the student's living environment and its impact on economic relations between Turkey and other countries. They provide examples of economic activities in different cities, focusing on export products such as textiles, agricultural goods, and tourism. The textbooks emphasize the significance of transportation in facilitating trade and highlight the importance of secure and efficient transportation systems in preserving the quality of exported goods. Additionally, the inclusion of communication technologies and the concept of E-trade reflects an effort to acknowledge the role of technology in promoting international economic relationships. Interconnectedness, which is one of the main concepts of global awareness, has been discussed in the fifth-grade social studies textbooks. The textbooks present interconnectedness through Turkey's economic relationship with other countries. Highlighting the concept of interconnectedness plays a crucial role in advancing global citizenship as it increases individuals' awareness of their interdependence with others, leading to a stronger commitment to prosocial values and a deeper connection with the global community (Reysen & Katzarska-Miller, 2013). However, it is important to note that nationalistic views are also evident in the narratives presented and centred. While highlighting the positive aspects of cultural interactions through tourism, there is a tendency to perpetuate biased and one-sided perspectives. The example of an English tourist's positive experience in Bodrum, Turkey, and the praise for Turkish culture without offering a balanced view may create an incomplete understanding of cultural interactions. On the other hand, the textbooks do recognize the concept of common heritage and highlight the collective contributions of various people, societies, civilizations, and nations to Turkey's shared legacy.

For the sixth-grade social studies textbooks, the emphasis on nationalism is evident through the focus on Turkey's geographic location, military power, and its role in solving problems in various regions. The textbooks highlight the contributions of organizations such as TİKA and TÜRKSOY in fostering relationships with Turkic Republics, but they provide limited information on economic relationships with other countries. The examination of the influence of popular culture is also influenced by nationalistic views, with a negative portrayal of Western lifestyle and its impact on Turkish culture. This finding is not surprising because as it was mentioned by Apple (2004), education is inherently political in nature. It is a deliberate and purposeful act that carries underlying ideological and political implications. This perspective emphasizes that education is not neutral but rather influenced by the values, beliefs, and power dynamics of society (Abawi & Eizadirad, 2022). Several Turkish scholars (Aktan, 2013; Kilinc et al., 2014) indicated that social studies curricula and textbooks have been used to transform Turkish society and nurture nationalistic, secular, and republican citizens. Indeed, textbooks play a significant role in shaping and perpetuating power relations within society. They are not only instruments for transmitting knowledge but also influential tools for either reinforcing or challenging existing power structures. The struggle over the content and interpretation of school knowledge, especially in subjects such as social studies and history, is highly contested (Wangdu, 2020). Evans (2006) also maintained

that social studies and history textbooks are seen as a means of strengthening national identity. They serve as a platform for promoting a shared historical narrative that fosters a sense of belonging and unity among citizens.

In the seventh-grade social studies textbooks, international organizations and economic relations are discussed, but the coverage of examining inequalities is limited. The textbooks provide examples of stereotypes about different cultures but fail to address various forms of inequality and social injustice within Turkey. While natural disasters and global issues are explored, the textbooks lack a comprehensive analysis of social inequalities and their potential solutions. Our findings indicated that equality is emphasized as a fundamental right of citizens to be treated equally under the law, the aspects of social equality and justice are notably absent from the curricula and textbooks. The omission of these critical topics raises concerns about addressing broader societal inequalities and promoting social justice within the educational framework and in the larger Turkish society. A similar concern has been raised by Ersoy (2013) that Turkish social studies textbooks associate equality with cooperation and solidarity, both at national and global levels, without specifically referencing the concept of social justice. The focus on cooperation and solidarity highlights the importance of unity and working together, but it may overlook the broader implications of addressing systemic social inequalities and promoting fairness in society.

Recommendations and Conclusion

In conclusion, the social studies textbooks in Turkey demonstrate both strengths and limitations in their approach to conceptualizing and teaching global citizenship. Research indicated that social studies textbooks in Turkey (Acikalin, 2010; Arar et al., 2016; Ersoy, 2013; Günel & Pehlivan, 2015; Günel, 2016; Kilinc & Tarman, 2018) as well as in numerous other countries (Evans, 2003; Philippou, 2009; Su, 2007) do not adequately address the concept of global citizenship. The incorporation of global citizenship education into educational materials and curricula is limited without sufficient emphasis on social justice, highlighting a widespread gap in promoting a broader understanding of global issues, intercultural competence, and fostering a sense of responsibility towards the global community.

By incorporating the following recommendations, Turkish social studies textbooks in Grades 4 to 7 can better fulfill their objective of preparing students to become informed and engaged global citizens. First, textbooks should provide a more balanced perspective by avoiding the promotion of nationalistic views and stereotypes. To enhance social studies education, it is essential to conduct a comprehensive evaluation of textbooks and curricula, with a particular emphasis on addressing bias, stereotypes, and the lack of diverse perspectives. Achieving a balanced and inclusive depiction of historical events, cultural interactions, and global issues is highly significant. By undertaking curriculum revisions, involving people with lived experiences impacted directly by various issues, teachers can cultivate a more accurate and inclusive understanding of society and its complexities, thus creating a more enriching educational experience for students.

Second, promoting the cultivation of critical thinking skills among students is of utmost importance. This can be accomplished by offering students opportunities to analyze and question the information presented in social studies textbooks and encouraging them to be activists in their local communities. Teachers play an essential role in creating a classroom environment that fosters open discussion and respectful exploration of diverse viewpoints. By nurturing critical thinking abilities, teachers empower students to become engaged learners, independent thinkers, and agents for social change by equipping them with essential skills for their academic and personal growth.

Third, a broader range of examples should be included to address various forms of inequality and social injustice to promote inclusivity. Social studies curricula should provide students with a deeper understanding of systemic issues and equip them with the knowledge and skills to actively address societal challenges through activism, allyship, and action-oriented solidarity. By broadening the scope of education, policymakers can empower students to become informed and engaged citizens, capable of contributing positively to their communities and the world.

Fourth, more comprehensive coverage of economic relationships and cultural interactions should be provided, ensuring an equitable representation of different cultures and fostering global perspectives. Creating opportunities for dialogue and project-based collaborations between students from diverse backgrounds fosters mutual respect and a genuine appreciation for diversity. By actively embracing intercultural understanding, school leaders and teachers can contribute to the creation of an inclusive educational environment that equips students with the necessary skills to succeed and thrive in a multicultural society.

Fifth, it is crucial to prioritize teacher preparation and professional development programs to achieve cultural diversity, inclusivity, and the effective application of critical pedagogy. Providing educators with the necessary resources and skills to facilitate meaningful discussions on sensitive topics and address biases in the classroom is significant. By giving priority to teacher training and including social justice topics as part of the training, governments demonstrate their commitment to equipping educators with the competencies and expertise required to create an educational environment that is both diverse and impartial.

Finally, establishing partnerships with civil society organizations, NGOs, and international institutions that specialize in cultural diversity, human rights, and global citizenship education brings significant advantages by creating access to experiential opportunities that supplement the curriculum content. Collaborative projects, workshops, and initiatives can enrich students' comprehension of diversity and provide hands-on experiential opportunities to advance inclusive education. Through collaboration and hands-on projects, schools gain access to valuable resources and expertise, contributing to a more inclusive and comprehensive social studies education.

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