



Evaluation of Elementary School 4th Grade Human Rights, Citizenship and Democracy Course's Curriculum According To Teachers' Perspectives: A Qualitative Research¹

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ABSTRACT

In Turkish Educational System, Human Rights, Citizenship and Democracy course is taught in the 4th grade of elementary schools as two hours a week. The aim of this study is to reveal the perspectives of the elementary school teachers about the implementation of 4th grade Human Rights, Citizenship and Democracy curriculum. In the study, phenomenology was used in the context of qualitative methodology. The study was carried out with 30 elementary school teachers working in Kastamonu province in the 2015-2016 academic year. Interview was used as the data collection tool and the gathered data were analyzed with content analysis. The results of the study showed that according to teachers, the curriculum is very abstract, the content of curriculum is above the student level and it can not be associated with daily life. Also, teachers said that in terms of the content similarity, the curriculum is in a structure that could be integrated into the social studies curriculum. In addition, it was determined that teachers considered the course as a necessary course due to its training democratic citizenship ideal and they are in favor of teaching it to students at early ages.

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Keywords:

Elementary school, human rights, citizenship, democracy, curriculum, teacher.

Introduction

Human rights; form the whole of individuals rights as the necessity of being an honorable entity without being exposed any injustices due to their race, gender, language, religion, material, and cultural status. Human rights are not, in fact, the current point, but the desired ideal to be reached (Yavuz, Duman & Karakaya, 2016: 57).

The element that connects an individual with the state and makes it a member is expressed as "citizenship". The state also recognizes the individual only as in the capacity of "citizen" in the legal dimension (Kepenekçi, 2014). According to Heater (2004: 194), the citizenship can be expressed as a legal,

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political position given by the state to the individual and as a bond of loyalty to the state. In an aspect of legal, it is called the "citizens" (countryman) who are real people connected with the state in a legal and political way. "Citizenship" (allegiance) means the political and legal bond that connects real persons with the state (Çiftci, 2008).

Democracy is a way to ensure the human rights legally (Crick, 2007). Democracy can be defined as to be tolerant, to oppose inequalities and to be respectful of differences (Naval, Print & Veldhuis, 2002). The existence of democracy can be achieved by keeping it alive without being interrupted by the societies that will support it. According to Gözütok (1999), the growth of the individuals who hold the elements of democracy and the building of a democratic society with democratic values is only possible with societies that have embraced democratic values.

There is no doubt that one of the most important tasks in the creation of societies that have adopted democratic values is to develop the educational activities. Education both maintains democracy and is also influenced by the democratic culture of the society (Başaran, 2007). Considering that one of the most essential goals of education is to educate citizens who can make their own decisions, have an active in society and have a free identity, it is revealed that the main element of the democracy and the factor that makes it alive is the education process. In these democratic societies, it is necessary giving priority to social media, citizenship and democracy education in order to value of the democracy of the citizens, the whole and to benefit from its content to reveal their personalities (Örücü, 1993, cited by Gülmez, 2001).

The education of human rights, citizenship and democracy demonstrates the necessity of approving as a "way of life" that democratic and pluralistic society in which individuals participate in. It enables democracy to be established, kept alive, protected, strengthened, and this consciousness is always carried and secured. With the development of using skills human rights, individuals can make objective decisions in the political and financial crises of the world. In this way, individuals can be able to measure human rights standards when the universal and national values are evaluated together (Kepenekçi, 2000).

The historical background of human rights, citizenship and democracy education in Turkey dates back to the last period of the Ottoman Empire. In this regard, from the II. Constitutional Monarchy (1908) up to the present, the issues in relation to human rights, citizenship, and democracy education have been included in school curricula with different names. In the II. Constitutional Monarchy Period, the course has gained a meaning in the context of the process of transition from vassal to citizen, constitutional development and law-making movements. With the Provisional Law of Elementary Education in 1913, a course with the name of "Civics, Moral and Economy Knowledge (Malumat-ı Medeniye, Ahlakiye ve İktisadiye)" was added to school programs. The aim of the course is to educate citizens who are responsible for themselves, their homeland, nation, and other citizens and who also know and use their rights (Safran, 2008; Üstel, 2014). The content of the course has been formed by some issues such as duties of citizens to the state, good aspects of constitutional administration, obedience to the Ottoman Sultan and the state institutions and public officers, the tasks of municipalities. The course had been also called "Moral Conversations (Musahabat-ı Ahlâkiye)" and "Homeland Knowledge (Malumat-ı Vataniye)" in the II. Constitutional Period (Altunya, 2003; Yücel, 1994: 209).

During the Republic of Turkey period, the education has been created by targeting to educate citizens who are aware of the rights and freedoms beyond just being a citizen while in the Ottoman Empire had aimed to educate the vassal (Sarıcan, 2006, cited by Keleşoğlu, 2008). In this sense, courses on human rights, citizenship, and democracy education have continued in republicanism. The course that was put into practice with the "Unity of Education Law (Tevhid-i Tedrisat Kanunu)" adopted in 1924, was taught for an hour in a week at the 4th and 5th grades by taking the name of "Homeland Knowledge (Malumat-ı Vataniye)" (Altunya, 2003). At this point, it can be said that the 1924 program which was the first program of the Republic, maintained its understanding in the Ottoman Empire.

The second program of the Republican period is the 1926 program. In the first school curriculum of 1926, the course name of Homeland Knowledge was renamed as "Civics" and was taught two hours in a week in the second semester of 4th and 5th grades of elementary school. It has been emphasized that the duty of Civics course will be very important in the first years of education and the main purpose of elementary

education is determined to educate citizens, adapt young people to the country and the nation where they are attached. (İlkmektep Müfredat Programı, 1930, cited by Üstel, 2014).

In the following process, the course has been studied under the different names at the different grades. For example, in the curriculum of the middle schools in 1931, the Civics course was one hour per week in all three classes. Civics course was given in the 4th and 5th grades in the 1936 program. In 1937 program it was removed from the first year of middle school and was only taught in the second and third grade as two hours per week. In 1948 program, Civics course also continued as an independent course in school programs (Üstel, 2014).

In 1962 draft elementary school curriculum, it was established a course called, "Society and Country Examinations" with the approval of the first interdisciplinary approach and thus the issues of human rights, citizenship and democracy were included in this course. In the main program published in 1968, "Society and Country Examinations" became "Social Studies" by changing its name (Öztürk & Dilek, 2005).

The Social Studies curriculum, which was taught in elementary and middle schools, was abolished in 1985 by the resolution of the Turkish Board of Education. Thus, three different courses under the name of National History, National Geography and Citizenship Information were introduced to teach instead of the Social Studies course in middle schools. The Social Studies curriculum in elementary schools was continued to be implemented by re-evaluating in 1990 (Gündem, 1995, cited by Kaymakcı, 2009). The new curriculum of Citizenship Information was introduced in the last year of middle school in 1992, and in 1993, the Citizenship Information and National History curricula were altered again (Sözer, 1998). The Citizenship Information course had been started to teach under the name of Citizenship and Human Rights Education in the 8th grade since the academic year of 1995-1996 with the protocol signed between the Ministry of Turkish National Education and the Ministry of Human Rights (MEB, 1995).

One of the regulations regarding human rights, citizenship and democracy education occurred in 1997. Within this context, a course called Citizenship and Human Rights Education had been started to teach in the 7th and the 8th grades as an hour per week in the 1997-1998 academic year. In this case, Citizenship and Human Rights Education curriculum, previously taught in the 8th grade at middle schools was not done any changes, and its topics were distributed into the new course (MEB, 1997).

In the early 2000s, a comprehensive curricula development was started to be done in the Turkish Education System and the human rights, citizenship and democracy education was affected by this changing. In the 1998 program, the course with the name of Citizenship and Human Rights Education, which was taught in the 7th and 8th grades were removed and their topics were integrated into the content of the Social Studies curricula as a cross-curriculum discipline (Kaymakcı, 2009; Tonga, 2013). In addition, with a regulation that was done in 2010, a new course called Citizenship and Democracy Education was added to the 8th grade in order to be taught an hour per week (MEB, 2011).

Another change in human rights, citizenship and democracy education occurred in 2012 as well. In the 2012-2013 academic year, the compulsory eight-year education process became twelve years and it was organized as a process of 4+4+4 after the amendment of Primary Education and Education Law. In this context, the name of "Citizenship and Human Rights Education" course, taught in the 8th grade of primary school, took the name of "Human Rights, Citizenship and Democracy". At the same time, the course was planned to teach beginning from the 2015-2016 academic year in the 4th grade of elementary school with the decision of Turkish Board of Education in 25.06.2012 (MEB, 2015).

There are lots of studies about the human rights, citizenship and democracy education. The related literature showed that that some studies have been aimed at human rights, citizenship and democracy education. Some of the studies were done based on the elementary school (Balbağ, Gürdoğan Bayır & Ersoy, 2017; Güven, Tertemiz & Bulut, 2009; Izgar, 2017; Kaçar & Kaçar, 2016; Kaymakcı, Öztürk, Palancı & Kırpık, 2015; Oğuz Haçat & Demir, 2017; Sağlam & Hayal, 2015; Toprak & Demir, 2017); middle school (Alkın, 2007; Arslan Türker, 2005; Aydeniz, 2010; Başaran, 2007; Çalık, 2002; Elkatmış, 2013; Erdoğan, 2015; Göz, 2010; Gözel, 2005; Güdücü, 2008; Gürbüz, 2006; Güven, 2010; Keleşoğlu, 2008; Koca, 1998; Metin, 2002; Özbek, 2004; Toraman, 2012; Ulubey, 2015; Ülger, 2013; Yılmaz, 2007) and both elementary and middle schools (Gürel, 2016; Som & Karataş, 2015; Ulusoy & Erkuş, 2016). In terms of the target audience, studies were done about the

opinions of teachers (Başaran, 2007; Er, Ünal & Özmen, 2013; Göz, 2010; Güdücü, 2008; Gürel, 2016; Güven, 2010; Güven, Tertemiz & Bulut, 2009; Kaçar & Kaçar, 2016; Kaymakçı et. al., 2015; Sağlam & Hayal, 2015; Toprak & Demir, 2017; Ulusoy & Erkuş, 2016; Ülger, 2013; Ülger & Yel, 2013; Yılmaz, 2007); students' views and their academic achievements (Arslan Türker, 2005; Gürbüz, 2006; Oğuz Haçat & Demir, 2017; Ulubey, 2015); the views of teachers and students (Balbağ, Gürdoğan Bayır & Ersoy, 2017) and the evaluation of curricula and textbooks (Alkın, 2007; Aydeniz, 2010; Çalık, 2002; Erdoğan, 2015; Gözel, 2005; Izgar, 2017; Keleşoğlu, 2008; Metin, 2002; Özbek, 2004; Toraman, 2012).

When these studies are evaluated as a whole, they discuss the different dimensions of the subject related to human rights, citizenship and democracy education. However it is seen that there is not any study that evaluates the human rights, citizenship, and democracy curriculum in accordance with the opinions of teachers. Concordantly, the existing problem will be eliminated and future studies will be inspired.

Aim

The aim of this study is to reveal the perspectives of elementary school teachers about the implementation of 4th grade Human Rights, Citizenship and Democracy (HRCD) curriculum. The following questions were asked in the study:

- What are the teachers' views on the meaning and necessity of the HRCD course?
- What are the teachers' views on the overlapping of HRCD and Social Studies courses' subjects?
- What are the teachers' views on the introduction of the HRCD curriculum?
- What are the teachers' views on the strengths and weaknesses of the HRCD curriculum?
- What are the teachers' problems that they face on implementing the HRCD curriculum?
- What are the suggestions of the teachers to make the HRCD curriculum more qualified?

Method

The qualitative research is a methodology that tries to reveal the emotions, thoughts and perspectives of the participants on any subject (Kuş, 2012). The study used phenomenology due to its features such as providing opportunities to learn participants' past experiences, allowing interpreting the certain situation based on participants' thoughts, and trying to explain them to the cases that are aware of it in everyday life but not have a deep and detailed understanding (Patton, 2014; Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2013).

Participants

The study group consisted of 30 elementary school teachers who teach the 4th grade HRCD course from the city center, districts and villages of Kastamonu province. The 62% of teachers are female and 38% are male. In order to determine the study group, criterion sampling was used among the purposive samplings. In the study, the criterion sample was used thanks to its features such as allowing individuals, events, situations that can fulfill the certain situations, to be included in the research and the opportunity to determine the units who are affordable the required criteria as a study group (Büyüköztürk, Çakmak, Akgün, Karadeniz & Demirel, 2013). As criterions, being an elementary school 4th grade teacher, teaching the HRCD course and the criteria of working in Kastamonu province or districts were determined.

Data Source

In the study, a structured interview was used as a data collection tool. The structured interview was used for reasons such as asking what kind of questions are asked in what way, and implementing the plan to determine exactly which data will be collected in a detailed way and minimizing the risk of occurrence of blank or unusual responses frequently encountered in surveys (Gall, Borg & Gall, 1996; Robson, 1993).

In the process of preparing the interview form, firstly the related literature has been reviewed; a question list has been prepared within the scope of determining the places that need to be determined in detail. The prepared form was examined by the 2 field experts and in the direction of their feedbacks the pilot study was done with 5 teachers. After this, n, there have been made regulations in the form by interviewing and the final version of the interview form, including 9 questions was prepared.

Data Collection

The data were collected in May and June of 2015-2016 academic year. The interview form was conducted by face-to-face and the data gathered by taking notes.

Data Analysis

The collected data were analyzed through content analysis. The content analysis is defined as a systematic, repeatable technique in which some words of a text are summarized with the smaller content categories that are based on specific rules-based encodings (Büyüköztürk et. al., 2008). The content analysis in the research was used because of being used in the analysis of qualitative data, bringing together similar data within the framework of certain concepts and themes, and the reader can interpret them in a way that they can understand (Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2013).

The data were analyzed by reading the written texts in line by line. The data was encoded to be sometimes a word and sometimes a sentence. With the analysis of the concepts and their relations with each other was revealed and these relations were explained with a higher category. The coded data were grouped according to similarities and differences, and they which were interrelated were classified and interpreted.

To provide the analyzing reliability, researcher triangulation was used. In this sense, two independent field experts were analyzed the data by reading one by one. Afterward, they compared their coding and the agreement percentages of the analyses were calculated. For this purpose, the reliability formula of Miles & Huberman (1994), [$P(\text{Reliability}) = \frac{Na(\text{Number of Agreements})}{Na(\text{Number of Agreements}) + Nd(\text{Number of Disagreements})} \times 100$] was used. As a result of this calculation, the percentage of agreement was 87.61%. Due to Neundorf's (2002, cited by Yürük, 2005) perception that approval of values of 80% or higher of the agreement percentage can be accepted as reliable, the analyses of data were admitted. Analyzed data were presented in Tables as frequency (f) and percentage (%). Also it was supported by direct quotations from interviews. In the research, the real names of the teachers were not used; instead, the teachers were given pseudonyms (T1, T2, T3, etc.).

Findings

The findings obtained from the interviews are explained below:

The Meaning and Necessity of HRCD Course

The opinions of teachers about the meaning of the HRCD course are explained below:

Table 1. The teachers' views on the meaning of the HRCD course

Opinions	f	%
Giving democratic life skills	10	52.63
Abstract course	9	47.37
Total	19	100

According to Table 1, 52.63% of the views observed the course as a lesson that has an ability to give democratic life skills. On the other hand, 47.37% of the teachers described the course as an abstract lesson that is only remained a theory.

The teachers indicated that they found the course meaningful due to the course that shapes the life, teaches the justice, reconciliation, values, rules of living and gives democratic life to educate a democratic personality. In concerning to the subject, Teacher 18 (T-18) expressed his/her taught as *"It is a course that provides opportunities to learn about human and children's rights. It gives the opportunity to be aware of their rights and responsibilities and to become a sensitive citizen."* The T-5 explained the meaning of the course in terms of training democratic citizenship by saying *"The course is a beneficial course for the students to realize their rights and responsibilities, to have an idea about justice, equality and consensus and to be a conscious person."*

According to 47.37% of teachers, this course contains the abstract concepts. According to T-30, *"The concepts of human rights, citizenship and democracy course are abstract; they are above the elementary level. Therefore, it is more appropriate to be taught in upper grades."*

The opinions of the teachers about the necessity of HRCD course are shown in Table 2:

Table 2. The teachers' views on the necessities of HRCD course

Opinions	f	%
Necessary	24	80
Unnecessary	6	20
Total	30	100

According to Table 2, 80% of the teachers stated that the course was necessary and 20% of them that was unnecessary.

The opinions of teachers about why HRCD course is necessary are shown as follows:

Table 3. The reasons of teachers about the necessity of HRCD course

Opinions	f	%
The ability of the democratic life skill	19	79.18
Unstated	4	16.66
Real life conformity	1	4.16
Total	24	100

It is understood from the Table 3, 79.18% of teachers thought that the course gives democratic life skills, and 4.16% of them considered the course as a necessary for real life. On the other hand, it was attracted notice that 16.66% of the teachers did not respond to the question.

T-15 who is one of the teachers think that students can gain the democratic life skill said that *"I think this course is helpful for knowing and practicing human rights and democracy."* T-10 explained his/her idea that this course is necessary in order to train democratic citizens with these words; *"Because the people get the notice that being a human generally when they take a responsibility in Turkey, this course will be laid the foundation the knowledge of human at this age, to live humanly, to learn the rules of society, to learn others as we are, to educate the people who are looking for their rights and who respect the rights of others who are self-confident."*

T-7 considered the course as necessary to be taught in this age group and said that *"I think it is a necessary course for this age group children."* According to the teacher (T-21) who thinks that it is essential for the real-life conformity, *"The information that will be learned is needed for its application to real life"*. While for the T-9, this course is necessary and having a future, says that *"It is extremely necessary, because the one who knows the rights of himself or herself become respectful of the rights of others."* T-17 explained the idea as *"It is important to be able to teach expressions such as right, freedom, justice, equality, compromise, responsibility for the students from the 4th grade."*

The opinions of the teachers on why HRCD course is unnecessary are detailed below:

Table 4. Teachers' views on why the HRCD course is not necessary

Opinions	f	%
Above students' levels	5	83.40
The similarity of subjects with Social Studies	1	16.60
Total	6	100

In Table 4, the opinions about why teachers think this course is not required are explained. According to this statement, while %83.40 of the teachers thought that the course was above the students' level, the 16.60% of the teachers remarked on its similarity with the Social Studies.

Teacher 1 who thinks this course is above the level express the idea as *"Human Rights, Citizenship and Democracy course is required in the 4th grade. However, it was prepared above the levels of 4th-grade students in terms of its content. It will be appropriate for students to ease the subjects a little more in order to make the students understand."* Another teacher (T-4) stated as *"This course is required in fourth-grade students to be able to learn their rights and responsibilities but it should be prepared the subjects and books by giving an importance to the level."*

T-3 who thinks the subjects of the course are similar to the Social Studies lesson expressed that *"Instead of being taught as a different course, it will be more convenient to combine with the Social Studies course as it covers the subjects of the Human Rights, Citizenship and Democracy course."*

To T-29, who suggest that it should be combined with social studies course and taught in the elementary and middle schools, *"It is a course for the middle schools above the level of 4th grade."* Either he/she specified that it

needs to be simplified and reorganized. Also, T-16 indicated as *"It's an unnecessary course. It can be added to the subjects of the Social studies course."*

The Overlapping Situation of HRCD and Social Studies Courses' Subjects

The opinions of the teachers on the overlapping of the subjects of the 4th grade HRCD course and the 4th grade Social Studies course are explained below:

Table 5. The teachers' views about the overlapping of HRCD with the 4th grade Social Studies subjects

Opinions	f	%
Overlapping	15	50
Not overlapping	13	43.33
Unstated	2	6.67
Total	30	100

According to Table 5, it is seen that 50% of the teachers said that the subjects overlap, 43.33% stated that the subjects did not overlap and 6.67% did not indicate any ideas.

Table 6. Teachers' views on the reasons for overlapping of HRCD and Social Studies subjects

Opinions	f	%
The content proximity in some themes	15	100

Table 6 examines the ideas of teachers about the reasons of overlapping of HRCD and Social Studies course. Accordingly, all of the teachers who claimed that the subjects of HRCD and Social Studies courses overlapped emphasized the proximity of the content. T-5 explained his/ her thoughts about the case as follows: *"It is ordinary for these two courses to overlap each other. Hence the Social Studies course includes the issues that concern the society, the 'Human' element consisting the society here also discusses the principles of being a sophisticated citizen with the Human Rights course."* To T-1; *"The 4 grade Human Rights, Citizenship and Democracy and Social Studies courses have the topics which are overlapping and close with each other. For instance, the combination of the All-in-One unit of the Social Studies course and the Living Together theme of Human Rights, Citizenship and Democracy are almost identical in terms of the content."*

In Table 7, the opinions of the teachers about the reasons for not being overlapping with the subjects of HRCD course and Social Studies course are explained. According to this, 75% of the teachers argued that the subjects are not related to each other and 25% also did not overlap because the subjects in the Social Studies course are insufficient.

Table 7. The opinions of the teachers about the reasons for not being overlapping with the subjects of HRCD course and the 4 grade Social Studies course

Opinions	f	%
The unrelated topics	10	75
Inadequacy of Social Studies subjects	3	25
Total	13	100

According to T-21, who says the issues are not related to each other; *"These are different courses, and they are not interrelated."* For T-13, *"The subjects of the two courses distinct from each other."* On the other hand, T-25, who stated that the inadequacy of the subjects of Social Studies course prevented the overlapping, explained his opinion as follows: *"Although it seems like the overlap, it is obvious that the subjects of Social Studies course are insufficient as compared with the subjects of the HRCD. For this reason, I have an opinion that teaching the Human Rights, Citizenship and Democracy will be more beneficial for individuals to become aware of their rights and to gain the consciousness of the citizenship, duty and responsibility."*

Presentation of the HRCD Course Curriculum

The opinions of the teachers about the preparation stage and introduction of the HRCD curriculum are described in Table 8:

Table 8. The opinions of the teachers about the preparation stage and introduction of the HRCD curriculum

Opinions	f	%
Insufficient	28	93.33
Unstated	2	6.67
Total	30	100

According to the table, while 93.33% of the teachers found the presentation insufficient, 6.67% did not give any opinion on the subject.

T-21, one of the teachers who gave a negative impression about the presentation of the program pointed out that *"No information has been given to us."* For T-22, *"It is a shortcoming that the opinion of the teachers as a practitioner has not been taken. But it will be useful if the teacher's criticism is taken into consideration in the process."* T-2 also implied that they were not informed, not promoted, and their ideas were not received with this sentence; *"During the preparation stage of the curriculum, we were not asked for an opinion and the program was not promoted."* T-1 stated that this was for the current program and his/her views were taken for the future program by saying *"The teachers' ideas were not consulted during the preparation of the current program, but the elementary school curricula, which will be implemented as from next year, has been opened to teachers' examination and opinions of all teachers about the curricula have been taken."*

The Advantages of the Curriculum

In Table 9, the opinions of the teachers on the advantages of curriculum are explained:

Table 9. The teachers' views on the advantages of the HRCD course curriculum

Opinions	f	%
Unstated	16	88.89
To emphasize the value education	2	11.11
Total	18	100

According to the table, 88.89% of the teachers did not give any opinion about the question while 11.11% pointed the emphasis' value education as the advantages of curriculum. The teachers who emphasize the value education stated that various values were given to the students in accordance with the tales given in the textbooks and have found the importance of giving the values through this course at an early age. T-20 expressed his/her thoughts; *"I see the students trying to gain the right behavior and thought by providing them to have reached their values education at an early age as the superior aspect of the program."*

The Weakness of the Curriculum

The opinions of the teachers on the weaknesses of the curriculum are discussed below:

Table 10. Teachers' views on the weaknesses of the HRCD course curriculum

Opinions	f	%
The intensity of the content	11	39.29
The weakness of the theoretical part	7	25
The inadaptability for the student level	6	21.43
The lack of activity examples	4	14.28
Total	28	100

In Table 10, the teachers' views on the weaknesses of the HRCD curriculum are explained. Starting from this point, 39.29% of the teachers described the content density, 25% weakness of the theoretical part in the curriculum, 21.43% of them said that students were unsuitable with regard to course level and 14.28% of them stated that the inadequacy of examples of activities as weaknesses of the program.

T-19 who is one of the teachers described the course density as *"The course is that has heavy and intensive content and the time is not enough at this point."* T-28 also commented as *"Because the content is a very intensive course, the weekly course hours must be increased to 3, 2 hours for the course is a weakness."* T- 17 drew attention to

the matter of inappropriateness for the student level by saying "It is a weakness that the course is above the student level as abstract." T-19 expressed this as "The content is complex and cannot get to the student level."

While T-23 stated the weakness of the theoretical part in the curriculum guide by saying "There is not enough explanation in the curriculum." T-12 asserted the inadequacy of activity examples as "Activity examples are insufficient in the curriculum."

The Problems in Implementing the HRCD Course Curriculum

93.33% of the teachers stated that there are problems related to the problems that were encountered during the implementation of the HRCD course curriculum, while 6.67% thought that there is not any problem. The problems encountered by teachers in implementing the curriculum are explained below as sub-topics:

The problems related to objectives dimension of the curriculum.

Table 11. Teachers' views on the problems encountered in the objectives dimension of the HRCD course curriculum

Opinions	f	%
Abstract objectives	21	75
Not achievable objectives	4	14.29
Inharmoniousness between the curriculum and textbook	3	10.71
Total	28	100

When the Table 11 is analyzed, it is seen that 75% of teachers complain about the abstract issues, 14.29% not achievable objectives and 10.71% the curriculum and textbook inharmoniousness.

The opinions of the teachers who complain about containing the abstract topics were expressed as: "Because the topics are abstract, some problems occur in teaching and students' internalizing the subjects." (T-6) "Topics should be concretized. In this form, it is prepared above the levels of 4th-grade students concerning its content. A little more alleviating of the subjects will be appropriate for the students to be able to understand." (T-1) "Achievements should be simplified; because the children of this age are in the transition period from perceptible to abstract. It's confusing to get into an abstract immediately." (T-10).

According to the teachers who think that objectives are not achievable; "The program is structured to give only information to the student not structured to transfer into practice." (T-20). T-19 also expressed his/her opinion by saying that "The learning outcomes at this age level do not include the works that the students can do."

According to the teachers, the textbook is not compatible with both the curriculum and life. For T-21, "The stories in the textbook are not suitable for both the program and today's life." T-19 said that "Textbooks have an essential position in the implementation of the programs. In this structure, the program does not correspond to what is offered in the book. Therefore, the textbook should be adapted to the program."

The problems related to the content dimension of the curriculum.

Table 12. Teachers' views on the problems encountered in the content dimension of the HRCD course curriculum

Opinions	f	%
Above the student level	14	93.33
Lack of time	1	6.67
Total	15	100

According to the Table 12, 93.33% of the teachers who asserted that they had problems with the content dimension said that the content was above the student level and 6.67% stated that the weekly time period is insufficient due to the density of the content.

According to the teachers who think that the content is above the level, the students have difficulty in understanding the topics because of the content is above the student level. This is the main reason why students understand the obvious issues rather than abstracts. T-29 expressed the idea by saying "The content

is not level of grade 4, but the content is very abstract. Mainly, because the concepts are abstract, students have difficulty in comprehending."

According to the teachers, the lack of time despite the intensity of the content is another problem. Considering the opinion of T-5; "Theme titles are quite significant and suitable to the class level. Children can identify with their own lives and give examples. However, due to the length of text and the depth of the themes, the time allocated for the course is not sufficient."

The problems related to the learning-teaching process dimension of the curriculum.

Table 13. Teachers' opinions about the problems encountered in the teaching-learning process dimension of the HRCD course curriculum

Opinions	f	%
Problems with the course book issues	15	78.95
Time problem	4	21.05
Total	19	100

In the Table 13, the teachers who have problems with the learning-teaching process of the curriculum mentioned the problems of the textbook (% 78.95) and the time problem (% 21.05).

As it is known, the textbooks are the outputs of the curriculum and they are among the most used teaching materials of teachers. In this sense, when the teaching and learning process was mentioned, teachers directly expressed their opinions which emphasized and brought into prominence the textbook. For teachers, the textbooks are not only incompatible with the acquisition but they are also the source of some problems in the learning-teaching process. The most critical problem with the textbook is to associate with the daily life. T-24 explained the opinion about this; "In the textbook, there some stories are very difficult to relate directly to daily life, and these stories are also abstract. Because of these stories, we have difficulty in motivating students to the lesson." Besides, some teachers declared that the textbook was above the student level and the texts were confused and long. According to T-2; "Texts in the textbook are long, complicated and not suitable for the student level."

For the teachers, one of the most significant problems encountered in the learning-teaching process is the time. Due to lack of time they can not use the modern teaching strategies, methods, and techniques. T-28's opinion is as follows: "The course time is insufficient in order to use active teaching techniques."

Problems related to the assessment and evaluation dimension of the curriculum.

Table 14. Teachers' views on the problems encountered in the assessment and evaluation dimension of the HRCD course curriculum

Opinions	f	%
The lack of information	14	82.36

When the Table 14 is considered, teachers complained about the lack of information. In this regard, T-13 said that "There is a lack of information on the concept of assessment and evaluation in the theoretical dimension of the curriculum. We do not know how to do the assessment and evaluation based upon the education program."

Teachers' Suggestions about to Make the Curriculum More Qualified

The suggestions of the teachers about to make the curriculum more qualified are given in Table 15:

Table 15. Teachers' suggestions about to make the HRCD course curriculum more qualified

Opinions	f	%
Getting teachers' advices	9	33.34
Simplifying the objectives	8	29.63
Adjusting content to student level	7	25.93
Developing theoretical part of the curriculum guide	2	7.40
Giving multiple perspectives	1	3.70
Total	27	100

According to table, 33.34% of the teachers thought that the opinions of the teachers should be taken, 29.63% of them stated that objectives of the curriculum should be reduced and simplified, 25.93% of them said that content of the curriculum should be adjusted to the student level, 7.40% of them pointed out that the theoretical part of the curriculum guide should be developed and %3.70 of them stated that curriculum should be reorganized to gain multiple perspectives to the students.

The idea of views of the teachers should be taken was highlighted by T-17 by saying with these words; *"The opinions of the teachers who have given education should be taken and it should not be changed continuously."* T-20 stated that *"Taking into account the opinions of classroom teachers in the process of preparation and development of the curriculum."* T-18 said; *"If examples of learning outcomes are exemplified clearly, they will be healthier."* T-22 also emphasized about the requirement of developing the theoretical part of the curriculum guide that *"There is not enough explanation in the curriculum, the curriculum has not helped me at this point."* The requirement of gaining the multiple perspectives, T-17 indicated as *"The student needs to be prepared to present a society and worldview that understands pluralistic change as richness."* and T-9 emphasized it by saying *"Teachers who teach this course should know Turkish people very well and do a good planning."*

Discussion, Conclusion and Suggestions

The human rights are the rights of people because they are human beings, people's commitment to the state is called citizenship, on the basis of human rights, and the system based on people's sovereignty is called democracy. It can be said that in the giving the idea of human rights, citizenship, and democracy to students is an essential extent of educational activities. Within this framework, one of the courses that were put into the Turkish Education System is Human Rights, Citizenship and Democracy which is taught at the 4th grade level in elementary schools. The results of this study, which was carried out to reveal the opinions of the elementary school teachers on the Human Rights, Citizenship and Democracy (HRCD) Course Curriculum, were as follows:

From the findings, it was found out that the majority of the teachers considered the course that gives the ability of democratic life skills. The feature of the course that develops the democratic life skills may have been influential in the formation of these thoughts of teachers. In addition, the abstraction of the course has been another point that teachers emphasized. It can be argued that this thought originated from the content of the course.

According to the majority of teachers, the course must be taught in the schools. They pointed out that in order to educate active citizens who know their rights, respect the rights of others, students are reconciling and aware of their responsibilities, love their country and nation, the course has to be taught from an early age. In the studies of Er, Ünal & Özmen (2013) and Kaymakcı et. al. (2015), teachers were united in the idea that the level of awareness of the students will be good and the level of awareness of the students will be better with the teaching of human rights, citizenship, and democracy course in early ages. Likewise, in the studies of Gözel (2005), Güven, Tertemiz & Bulut (2009), and also in the studies of Balbağ, Gürdoğan Bayır & Ersoy (2017), the necessity to teach from the early classes was emphasized on human rights, citizenship and democracy. From this point of view, it can be said that it is appropriate to teach the course at an early age, but it is essential to keep the teaching of the subjects related to the course and to continue teaching in the upper classes also in this context.

The majority of the teachers believe that the course subjects overlap with the Social Studies course. Considering that Social Studies is a program of citizenship education (Barth & Demirtaş, 1997), the naturalness of the overlapping of the subjects appear, which is also expressed by teachers who suggest that the course is unnecessary in the study findings. In the studies of Sağlam & Hayal (2015), also of Kaçar & Kaçar (2016), the teachers want to integrate the subjects of "Human Rights, Citizenship and Democracy" into "Social Studies" course and it should be kept in consciousness that the repetition of the subjects of two different courses at the same class level may adversely affect students' learning.

The preponderance of the teachers passed a remark that the curriculum of the course was not well promoted and the level of knowledge about the program was insufficient. It is likely that teachers who are not familiar with the whole curriculum and the philosophy of the curriculum will not be able to achieve the aims of the course. In some studies (Balbağ, Gürdoğan Bayır & Ersoy, 2017; Gürel, 2016; Güven, 2010; Kaymakcı et.

al., 2015; Ülger, 2012; Ülger & Yel, 2013), it has been determined that there are in-service education needs of teachers regarding human rights, citizenship and democracy teaching. From this point of view it can be said that this situation can be the result from the inadequate content of the theoretical dimension of the curricula and/or the lack of qualified in-service preparation for teachers.

The low level of awareness of teachers about the curriculum is reflected in their comments on the quality of the program. The majority of teachers chose not to respond to the advantages of the curriculum. A small number of teachers, except those who did not respond, stated that the curriculum emphasized the value education based on the tales included in the textbooks. On the other hand, the predominance of teachers described the intensity of the course content as one of the weaknesses of the program. In addition, teachers have shown the weakness of the theoretical part of the curriculum guide, the inappropriateness of student level, and inadequacy of activity examples as among the curriculum's deficiencies. With the studies that Gürel (2016), Kaçar & Kaçar (2016) and Ulusoy & Erkuş (2016), it is said that teachers have pointed to issues such as content density and unsuitability with the student level. Within this context, it can be claimed that emergence of similar results in different studies give important clues about the weaknesses of the curriculum and their contents.

The generality of the teachers affirmed that they had encountered various problems when implementing the program. These problems were determined related to the inclusion of abstract subjects, not achievable objectives and the curriculum and textbook inharmoniousness for the dimension of objectives; being above the level of students and lack of time for the dimension of content, the textbook and time problems for the dimension of teaching-learning process; and due to lack of information for the dimension of assessment-evaluation. When the results of the study are compared with the results of the other studies in the literature (Balbağ, Gürdoğan Bayır & Ersoy, 2017; Gürel, 2016; Izgar, 2017; Kaçar & Kaçar, 2016; Toprak & Demir, 2017; Ulusoy & Erkuş, 2016), it is seen that the results are similar in general. This situation explicates that there are various problems related to the dimensions of the curriculum and list the measures to be taken.

To enhance the curriculum majority of the teachers suggested that the opinions of the teachers should be taken into account. In addition, teachers offered to reduce and simplify the objectives of curriculum and adjust the curriculum content to the student level. Also they proposed to develop theoretical part of the curriculum guide and reorganize the curriculum to gain multiple perspectives to the students.

Based on the results of the study, the following recommendations can be made:

- The objectives, content, learning-teaching process and assessment-evaluation dimension of the Human Rights, Citizenship and Democracy course should be reviewed and the deficiencies indicated in the studies should be eliminated.
- Studies on Human Rights, Citizenship and Democracy should be diversified in terms of quality and quantity. In this sense, there may do researches focusing on subjects such as curriculum and textbooks, on different sample groups which are carried out with different data collection tools.
- Since the content of the curriculum mostly overlaps with the Social Studies, the subjects can be integrated in the Social Studies course.
- It was determined that teachers were not good at reading the curriculum. In this manner, it can be said that some teachers have not adequately known, read and studied the curriculum as required. To solve this problem, some measures like professional studies, seminars and in-service training activities can be done. Also the theoretical part of curriculum guide can be developed and a richer structure which includes the samples can be created in the content.
- The lack of information in the assessment and evaluation dimension of the curriculum should be revised, and the assessment and evaluation dimension should include both traditional and formative tools and methods.
- Curriculum development process should open to all shareholders and teachers' opinions should be taken by authority.

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GENİŞLETİLMİŞ ÖZET

İlkokul 4. Sınıf İnsan Hakları, Yurttaşlık ve Demokrasi Dersi Öğretim Programının Öğretmen Görüşlerine Göre Değerlendirilmesi: Nitel Bir Araştırma³

Problem Durumu ve Araştırmanın Amacı

Ülkemizde insan hakları yurttaşlık ve demokrasi eğitiminin tarihsel geçmişi Osmanlı Devleti'nin son dönemine kadar uzanmaktadır. Günümüze kadar devam eden süreç içerisinde farklı adlar ve sınıf düzeylerinde okutulan insan hakları, yurttaşlık ve demokrasi eğitimine ilişkin yapılan bir değişiklik de 2012 yılında meydana gelmiştir. Bu çerçevede ortaokul 8. sınıfta okutulan "Vatandaşlık ve İnsan Hakları Eğitimi" dersinin adı değiştirilerek "İnsan Hakları, Yurttaşlık ve Demokrasi (İHYD)" dersi adını almış ve dersin 2015-2016 eğitim-öğretim yılından itibaren ilkokul 4. sınıflarda haftada iki ders saati okutulması planlanmıştır (MEB, 2015).

İlgili literatür tarandığında insan hakları, yurttaşlık ve demokrasi eğitime yönelik birtakım araştırmaların yapıldığı görülmektedir. Ancak bu araştırmalar bir bütün olarak değerlendirildiğinde, araştırmaların insan hakları, yurttaşlık ve demokrasi eğitime ilişkin konuların farklı boyutlarını ele almasına karşın İlkokul 4. sınıf İnsan Hakları, Yurttaşlık ve Demokrasi Dersi Öğretim Programını öğretmen görüşleri doğrultusunda derinlemesine ve çok yönlü değerlendiren bir araştırmaya rastlanmadığı görülmektedir. Bu bağlamda yapılacak bir araştırmayla alanda bulunan eksiklik giderilecek ve ileriki araştırmalara da esin kaynağı olunacaktır.

Bu araştırmanın amacı sınıf öğretmenlerinin İlkokul İnsan Hakları, Yurttaşlık ve Demokrasi Dersi (İHYD) Öğretim Programına yönelik görüşlerini ortaya koymaktır. Araştırmada aşağıdaki sorulara cevap aranmıştır:

- Öğretmenlerin İHYD dersinin anlamı ve gerekliliğine yönelik görüşleri nelerdir?
- Öğretmenlerin İHYD dersi ile Sosyal Bilgiler dersi konularının birbiriyle örtüşme durumuna yönelik görüşleri nelerdir?
- Öğretmenlerin İHYD dersi öğretim programının tanıtımına yönelik görüşleri nelerdir?
- Öğretmenlerin İHYD dersi öğretim programının üstün ve zayıf yönlerine yönelik görüşleri nelerdir?
- Öğretmenlerin İHYD Dersi Öğretim Programını uygularken karşılaştıkları sorunlar nelerdir?
- Öğretmenlerin İHYD dersi öğretim programının daha nitelikli hale getirilmesi için önerileri nelerdir?

Yöntem

Araştırmada nitel metodoloji kapsamında olgubilimden yararlanılmıştır. Araştırmanın çalışma grubunu Kastamonu ili merkezi, ilçeleri ve köylerinden ilkokul 4. sınıf İHYD dersini okutan toplam 30 sınıf öğretmeni oluşturmaktadır. Çalışma grubunun belirlenmesinde amaçlı örnekleme yöntemlerinden ölçüt örnekleme kullanılmıştır. Araştırmada nitel veri toplama aracı olarak yapılandırılmış mülakat kullanılmıştır. Araştırmaya ilişkin veriler 2015-2016 eğitim-öğretim yılı ikinci dönemi Mayıs ve Haziran ayları içerisinde toplanmıştır. Araştırma kapsamında toplanan veriler içerik analizi aracılığıyla çözümlenmiştir.

Bulgular

Araştırma kapsamında mülakatlardan elde edilen bulgular aşağıda açıklanmıştır:

İHYD Dersinin Anlamı ve Gerekliliği

Öğretmenlerin % 52.63'ü dersi demokratik yaşam becerisi kazandıran bir ders olarak görmektedirler. Öte yandan öğretmenlerin %47.37'si ise dersi soyut bir ders olarak nitelendirmişlerdir. Öğretmenlerin % 80'i dersin gerekli olduğunu, % 20'si gereksiz olduğunu belirtmiştir.

İHYD Dersi ile Sosyal Bilgiler Dersi Konularının Örtüşme Durumu

Öğretmenlerin % 50'sinin konuların örtüştüğü, % 43.33'ünün konuların örtüşmediği yönünde beyanda buldukları, % 6.67'sinin ise herhangi bir fikir belirtmediği görülmektedir. İHYD dersi ile Sosyal Bilgiler dersi konularının örtüştüğünü iddia eden öğretmenlerin tamamı içeriğin yakınlığına vurgu yapmıştır.

³Bu araştırma Doç. Dr. Selahattin Kaymakçı danışmanlığında Betül Akdeniz tarafından 2018 yılında Kastamonu Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü'nde tamamlanan "İlkokul 4. Sınıf İnsan Hakları, Yurttaşlık ve Demokrasi Dersi Öğretim Programının Öğretmen Görüşlerine Göre Değerlendirilmesi (Kastamonu Örneği)" adlı yüksek lisans tezi temel alınarak hazırlanmıştır.

Öğretmenlerin % 75'i konuların birbiriyle ilişkili olmadığı için, % 25'i ise sosyal bilgiler dersindeki konuların yetersiz kaldığı için örtüşmediğini ileri sürmüşlerdir.

İHYD Dersinin Öğretim Programının Tanıtımı

Öğretmenlerin %93.33'ü tanıtımı yetersiz bulurken, %6.67'si ise konuya ilişkin herhangi bir görüş bildirmemiştir.

Programın Üstün Yönleri

Öğretmenlerden %88.89'u soruya herhangi bir görüş bildirmemiş, %11.11'i ise programın üstün yönü olarak değer eğitime vurgu yapmasını göstermişlerdir. Değer eğitime vurgu yapan öğretmenler özellikle ders kitaplarında verilen masallardan hareketle öğrencilere çeşitli değerlerin kazandırıldığını belirtmişler, erken yaşlarda bu ders aracılığıyla değerlerin verilmesini ise önemli bulmuşlardır.

Programın Zayıf Yönleri

Öğretmenlerin %39.29'u içerik yoğunluğunu, %25'i öğretim programı kılavuz kitapçığındaki kuramsal kısmın zayıflığını, %21.43'ü öğrenci seviyesine uygun olmamayı ve %14.28'i de etkinlik örneklerinin yetersizliğini programın zayıf yönleri olarak nitelendirmişlerdir.

İHYD Dersi Öğretim Programı Uygulanırken Karşılaşılan Sorunlar

İHYD dersi öğretim programının uygulanışında karşılaşılan sorunlara ilişkin öğretmenlerin %93.33'ü sorunun var olduğunu ifade ederken, %6.67'si sorun olmadığını belirtmişlerdir. Öğretmenler sorunları öğretim programının kazanım, içerik, öğrenme-öğretme süreci ile ölçme-değerlendirme boyutları çerçevesinde açıklamışlardır.

Programın Daha Nitelikli Hale Gelmesi İçin Yapılması Gerekenler

Öğretmenlerin %33.34'ü uygulayıcıların görüşlerinin alınması gerektiğini, %29.63'ü kazanımların azaltılıp sadeleştirilmesi gerektiğini, %25.93'ü öğrenci seviyesine uygun hale getirilmesini, %7.40'ı kuramsal kısmın geliştirilmesi gerektiğini, %3.70'i ise çoklu bakış açısı kazandırılması gerektiğini belirtmişlerdir.

Tartışma ve Sonuç

Bulgulardan öğretmenlerin çoğunluğunun dersi demokratik yaşam becerisi kazandıran bir ders olarak gördükleri tespit edilmiştir. Öğretmenlerin çoğunluğuna göre ders mutlaka erken yaşlardan başlayarak öğretilmelidir. Er, Ünal ve Özmen'in (2013) ile Kaymakcı ve arkadaşlarının (2015) çalışmalarında da öğretmenler büyük oranda insan hakları, yurttaşlık ve demokrasi dersi içeriğiyle öğrencilerin erken yaşlarda tanışmalarının iyi olacağı ve bu konudaki bilinç seviyelerinin artacağı düşüncesinde birleşmişlerdir. Öğretmenlerin çoğunluğu ders konularının sosyal bilgiler dersiyle örtüştüğüne inanmaktadırlar. Öğretmenlerin çoğunluğu dersin öğretim programının yeterince tanıtımının yapılmadığı ve programa ilişkin bilgi düzeylerinin yetersiz olduğu yönünde fikir beyan etmişlerdir. Yapılan bazı araştırmalarda da (Balbağ, Gürdoğan Bayır ve Ersoy, 2017; Gürel, 2016; Güven, 2010; Kaymakcı vd, 2015; Ülger, 2012; Ülger ve Yel, 2013) insan hakları, yurttaşlık ve demokrasi eğitime yönelik öğretmenlerin hizmetiçi eğitim ihtiyaçlarının bulunduğu tespit edilmiştir. Öğretmenlerin öğretim programına ilişkin farkındalık düzeylerinin düşük olması programın niteliğine ilişkin yorumlarına yansımıştır ki öğretmenlerin çoğunluğu programın üstün yönleriyle ilgili cevap vermeme yolunu seçmiştir. Öğretmenlerin çoğunluğu programı uygularken kazanım, içerik, öğrenme-öğretme süreci ve ölçme-değerlendirme açısından çeşitli sorunlarla karşılaştıklarını da beyan etmişlerdir.