

# Teachers' Views on the Achievement Level of the Learning Outcomes in the New 2017-2018 Grade Five Social Studies Curriculum

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## Abstract

Technological and social changes necessitate changes in education programs as well. Thus, with the changes and improvements made in education programs over time, new curricula were introduced to replace the existing ones. The most recent reform made in the education programs in Türkiye was in the year 2017, during which the social studies curriculum was also renewed. To what extent learning outcomes are achieved in a curriculum can be best assessed by the teachers who are the implementers of the curriculum. Curriculum studies in the literature are mostly focused on the teacher, students, expert opinions and comparative studies. The aim of the present study was to determine the extent to which the learning outcomes in the new 2017 grade 5 social studies curriculum were achieved based on teachers' views. Descriptive research methods, namely the survey, and mixed qualitative-quantitative research models were utilized. The data collection tool used in the present research study was developed by the researcher: "Questionnaire on Teachers' Views Regarding the Achievement Levels of the New 2017-2018 Grade 5 Social Studies Course Learning Outcomes". This questionnaire consists of three parts and includes open-ended questions. The data of the study were obtained from 60 grade 5 social studies teachers out of the 99 social studies teachers working in 49 official secondary schools in the city center of Tokat. Frequency (f), percentage (%), standard deviation (ss), t-test, Oneway ANOVA, and the Shcheffe test were used in the analysis of the data obtained.

## Key Words

Curriculum • Social studies • Teacher views

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## Introduction

Education is a process by which individuals are equipped with knowledge, skills, values and attitudes. During this process, individuals engage in learning which leads to behavioral changes. People are in continuous interaction with each other and their environment. Since each individual's communication and interaction with people and their environment is different, their behavioral learning outcomes also vary. Thus, education is a process of creating change in behavior by means of people's own life experiences (Erden, 2004). One of the fundamental elements of an education system is the curriculum. The curriculum sits at the center of all kinds of reform work in education. Changes and reforms in education programs over time are inevitable. Hence, this necessitates the development and implementation of new programs. The newly designed programs need to be the most effective in their time period. Based on the technological and social changes and developments over time, the designed programs start to become insufficient in meeting needs. Hence, based on the time period during which they are implemented and the changes that are taking place in the world, programs need to be evaluated. Thus, with the changes made in the 2004-2005 education programs, there was a transition to constructivist and student-centered education models. Accordingly, to meet the needs of the changing world, the 'Social Studies Education Program' was renewed at various points in time (Tay, 2017).

The Social Studies subject was first incorporated into the primary education curriculum in 1968. Changes were made in the secondary school education curriculum in the 1970-1971 academic year; the sciences and social studies subjects started to be piloted in schools defined by the Ministry of Education. In 1985, the social studies subject was removed; it was replaced by the subjects of national history, national geography and citizenship. In 1990, a new primary school curriculum was developed and various changes to the 1968 curriculum were made. The social studies subject was reincorporated into the 1997 secondary school curriculum. Moreover, in 1997, compulsory education was increased to 8 years. This increase created inevitable changes in the education program. This also impacted the social studies subject. The social studies subject was subjected to various changes and amendments in the year 2005 as well. Education programs were redesigned based on the constructivist approach to learning (Daşcıoğlu et al., 2014). The most recent changes in education programs were made in the year 2017, and this led to the renewal of the social studies curriculum. The 2017 education program, which was developed in combination by the General Directorates of Elementary Education, the Secondary Education, and Religious Education, was initially opened to the public for feedback and subsequently published on the official website of the Ministry of Education; after receiving opinions and recommendations, it was approved on 2nd May 2017 by the Board of Education and Discipline. The new education program was implemented in grades 1, 5 and 9 during the 2017-2018 academic year; it was implemented in the other grade levels during the 2018-2019 academic year.

In the new 2017 grade 5 social studies curriculum (hereby referred to as the 2015 grade 5 SSC), the most prominent change was in the reduction of the number of learning outcomes and the change in the topics to be covered. While the number of learning outcomes in the former curriculum was 46, this showed a significant drop to 34 learning outcomes in the new 2017 curriculum. Moreover, there was a total of eight learning domains in the grade 5 curriculum; this dropped to seven learning domains in the new 2017 curriculum, six of which were observed to be the same with those in the previous curriculum and the seventh a new learning domain called 'Effective Citizenship'.

In the previous curriculum, the concept 'unit' was used, whereas in the new 2017 grade 5 SSC, this was replaced with the concept 'learning domain'.

### **Research Questions**

To serve the purpose of the present study, the responses to the following research questions were sought:

What are the teachers' views on the achievement levels of the social studies learning outcomes and the influential factors?

a) Do achievement levels show variance by the sufficiency and method of the training provided to introduce the new curriculum?

b) What are the teachers' views regarding the effect of discipline of graduation, class size, gender and the teacher's level of experience in teaching?

c) What are the responses to the open-ended questions?

### **The Aim of the Study**

In the present study, the aim was to determine the extent to which the learning outcomes of the new social studies course curriculum were attained based on teachers' views.

### **Significance of the Study**

The teacher is not one who transfers knowledge to students during the teaching and learning process, but one who guides students in their effort to achieve the learning outcomes. The new social studies course was implemented in grades 4 and 5 in the 2017-2018 academic year. In the new curriculum, certain changes were made in both the content and the learning outcomes. While many new learning domains were added to the grade 5 social studies curriculum, some of the learning domains were removed. Furthermore, there was a reduction in the number of learning outcomes when compared to the former curriculum. Learning outcomes are the most important elements in the curriculum. Hence, when determining the number of learning outcomes to be placed in curricula to be developed in the future, it is important to identify to what extent the learning outcomes in the 2017 curriculum were achieved (Tay, 2017).

In the present era, the rapid changes in digital technologies have led to changes in the education system and the targetted human model (Çalışkan & Yiğittir, 2011). Education programs have also been impacted by these changes. Hence, the education program was renewed in 2017, and, thus the social studies curriculum was also renewed. In consistency with these changes and reforms, the learning outcomes that changed and reduced in number when compared to those in the previous curriculum were focused on in the present study; teachers were consulted for their views in related to the extent to which the learning outcomes were achieved.

## **Method**

### **Research Design**

Descriptive research methods, namely the survey, and the mixed qualitative-quantitative research models were utilized in the present study, which aimed to identify the extent to which the learning outcomes of the social studies course of the 2017 grade 5 SSC were reached based on teachers' views.

### Population and Sample

In order to collect information, telephone calls were made to 49 secondary schools that were found to be located in the Tokat province in order. The population of the present study was comprised of 99 social studies teachers teaching the social studies course during the second term of the 2017-2018 academic year in secondary schools in the Tokat province bound by the National Ministry of Education. The sample of the study was comprised of 60 social studies teachers teaching the grade 5 social studies course in central secondary schools in the Tokat province bound by the National Ministry of Education. A questionnaire, which also included open-ended questions, was administered to these teachers. 57 of these were reached, while 3 could not be reached for various reasons. Thus, 57 questionnaire forms were administered and these forms formed the basis of the present research study.

Table 1 below presents the frequency (f) and percentage (%) distributions of the characteristics of the teachers in the sample group in terms of gender, discipline of graduation, teaching experience, average class size, method of participation in the introduction of the new curriculum, the sufficiency condition of the training offered to introduce the new curriculum.

Table 1

#### *Distributions of the Participant Teachers' Characteristics*

Characteristics	Groups	Frequency(n)	Percentage (%)
Gender	Female	21	36.8
	Male	36	63.2
	Total	57	100.0
Discipline of graduation	Social Studies Teaching	35	61.4
	History Teaching	13	22.8
	Geography Teaching	9	15.8
	Total	57	100.0
Experience	10 or more years	25	43.9
	11 or fewer years	32	56.1
	Total	57	100.0
Class size	10-20	23	40.4
	21-30	23	40.4
	31-40	11	19.3
	Toplam	57	100.0
Method of participation in the introduction of the new curriculum	In-service Training	11	19.3
	Seminar	29	50.9
	Meeting	9	15.8
	No Participation	8	14.0
	Total	57	100.0
The sufficiency condition of the training received for the introduction of the new curriculum	Yes	10	17.5
	Partially	28	49.1
	No	19	33.3
	Total	57	100.0

### Research Instruments

A questionnaire refers to a list of questions prepared to reveal individuals' views, knowledge, and attitudes with the aim of identifying any particular condition (Gelen et al., 2007). Open-ended questions do not require individuals' responses to be standard, and they facilitate individuals in responding to the questions (Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2011). The data collection tool used in the present study, which aimed to identify the achievement levels of the new grade 5 social studies course learning outcomes implemented in the 2017-2018 academic year, was the "Questionnaire on Teachers' Views Regarding the Achievement Levels of the New 2017-2018 Grade 5 Social Studies Course Learning Outcomes"; this questionnaire was developed by the researcher and was administered to secondary school grade 5 social studies course teachers to collect the data.

The questionnaire consists of three sections. In the first section, there are seven questions on personal information. The second section contains the 34 learning outcomes of the 2017-2018 grade 5 social studies course. In the third section, there are six open-ended questions in relation to the achievement levels of the grade 5 social studies course learning outcomes defined in the new 2017-2018 curriculum. Of these six questions, three were selected to be used within the scope of the present study. The data obtained from the open-ended questions in the study were analysed via the qualitative research method of content analysis. Content analysis is the method of determining the presence and usage conditions of words, sentences, concepts, themes and categories and converting them to numeric values (Kızıltepe, 2015). The similarities and differences among the responses given to the open-ended questions were examined to form themes, and the statements within the same theme were categorized.

### Reliability of the Survey

Cronbach's Alpha is used when the questionnaire is based on a five-point Likert scale (Büyüköztürk, 2008). Cronbach's Alpha, the most widely known method of measuring reliability, yields a reliability coefficient based on internal consistency. If the Cronbach's Alpha coefficient is above 0.70, that questionnaire is regarded to be reliable (Başol, 2015).

The reliability coefficients (Cronbach's Alpha) of the data in the present study regarding the achievement levels of the grade 5 social studies learning outcomes by learning domains are presented below.

Table 2

*The Reliability Coefficients of the Grade 5 Social Studies Course Learning Outcomes by Learning Domain*

Learning domains	Cronbach's Alpha Values
Individual and Society	0.820
Culture and Heritage	0.906
People, Places and Environments	0.889
Science, Technology and Society	0.903
Production, Distribution and Consumption	0.879
Effective Citizenship	0.836
Global Connections	0.863

### **Data Collection**

As the data collection tool in the present study, a questionnaire was developed by the researcher and used to collect data, namely the “Questionnaire on Teachers’ Views Regarding the Achievement Levels of the New 2017-2018 Grade 5 Social Studies Course Learning Outcomes”. The required permission to administer the questionnaire was received from the Tokat Directory of National Education. School visits were made between 20 May and 30 June, and the questionnaire forms were filled by the teachers who were reached via e-mail. A literature review was performed in this subject area.

### **Data Analysis**

The data obtained in the present research study were analyzed by using the SPSS (Statistical Package for Social Sciences) for Windows 22.0. To analyze the data, descriptive statistics analyses were utilized to obtain the count, frequency, mean and standard deviation. Moreover, t-tests were used in the comparison of continuous quantitative data between two independent groups and the oneway ANOVA test to compare the continuous quantitative data between more than two independent groups. To identify the variance after the ANOVA test, the Scheffe test was used to conduct a complementary post-hoc analysis.

In the questionnaire, the following Likert statements were used: Completely Agree, Strongly Agree, Somewhat Agree, Partially Agree, and Strongly Disagree. The learning outcomes that were categorized and named with the learning domain they belonged to were evaluated based on a score between 1 and 5. To calculate the distribution interval, the following formula was used:  $\text{Distribution interval} = \text{Highest value} - \text{Lowest value} / \text{number of degree}$ . This interval has an interval of 4 scores. This interval was divided into five equal sub intervals: 1.00-1.79 was defined as “very low”, 1.80-2.59 as “low”, 2.60-3.39 as “moderate”, 3.40-4.19 as “high”, 4.20-5.00 as “very high”, and the results were interpreted based on these cut-off values (Sümbüloğlu, 1993).

The descriptive research method of content analysis was employed to analyze the data obtained from the open-ended questions in the present study.

## **Results**

### **Results Regarding Teachers’ Achievement Levels of the new Grade 5 Social Studies Course Learning Outcomes Based on Teacher’s Views**

The responses that the teachers in the sample group provided in relation to the achievement levels of the new social studies course learning outcomes are summarised in the table below in terms of frequency (f), percentage (%), standard deviation and means. In addition, six open-ended questions were asked to the teachers in the third section of the data collection tool: "Questionnaire on Teachers’ Views Regarding the Achievement Levels of the New 2017-2018 Grade 5 Social Studies Course Learning Outcomes". Analyses of the data obtained were conducted to seek responses to the research questions.

Table 3

*The Distribution of the Responses of the Teachers on Achievement Levels of the New Grade 5 Social Studies Course Learning Outcomes*

	Strongly Disagree		Partially Agree		Somewhat Agree		Strongly Agree		Completely Agree		M	SD
	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%		
<b>LEARNING DOMAIN: Individual and Society</b>												
Develop awareness of the contribution of the social studies course to their own development as an active citizen of the Turkish Republic	1	1.8	3	5.3	9	15.8	20	35.1	24	42.1	4.105	0.976
Explain the multi-dimensionality of an event based on an experience in their immediate environment	0	0.0	6	10.5	8	14.0	24	42.1	19	33.3	3.982	0.954
Demonstrates behavior appropriate to the rights and responsibilities of the roles assumed in the groups they are a part of	0	0.0	2	3.5	12	21.1	23	40.4	20	35.1	4.070	0.842
Provides examples for benefitting from children's rights and for violations of these rights	0	0.0	3	5.3	12	21.1	17	29.8	25	43.9	4.123	0.927
<b>LEARNING DOMAIN: Culture and Heritage</b>												
Develop awareness of the contributions of ancient civilizations to history of humanity based on concrete remnants	1	1.8	6	10.5	19	33.3	19	33.3	12	21.1	3.614	0.996
Introduce the natural objects and historical places, objects and works in their environment	0	0.0	6	10.5	5	8.8	22	38.6	24	42.1	4.123	0.965
Identify similar and different features by comparing the various cultural features of Turkey and the cultural features of the area of residence	0	0.0	5	8.8	16	28.1	20	35.1	16	28.1	3.825	0.947
Analyse the role that cultural elements have in people's co-existence	0	0.0	4	7.0	11	19.3	27	47.4	15	26.3	3.930	0.863
Evaluate the historical development of the cultural elements in daily life	0	0.0	8	14.0	16	28.1	19	33.3	14	24.6	3.684	1.003
<b>LEARNING DOMAIN: People, Places and Environments</b>												
Explain the general topographic map features of the regions of settlement	0	0.0	3	5.3	12	21.1	22	38.6	20	35.1	4.035	0.886
Explain and exemplify with daily life examples the impact of the climate in residential areas on human activities	0	0.0	0	0.0	10	17.5	23	40.4	24	42.1	4.246	0.739
Associate the effects of natural and anthropic features in their area on population and settlement	0	0.0	4	7.0	11	19.3	21	36.8	21	36.8	4.035	0.925
Question the reasons underlying the disasters and environmental problems in their area of residence	0	0.0	2	3.5	11	19.3	22	38.6	22	38.6	4.123	0.847
Explain and exemplify the impacts of natural disasters on social life	0	0.0	0	0.0	10	17.5	22	38.6	25	43.9	4.263	0.745
<b>LEARNING DOMAIN: Science, Technology and Society</b>												
Question the accuracy and reliability of the information obtained from virtual media	1	1.8	3	5.3	16	28.1	20	35.1	17	29.8	3.860	0.972
Pay careful attention to using the virtual media in a secure way	1	1.8	4	7.0	11	19.3	26	45.5	15	26.3	3.877	0.946

**RESEARCH ON EDUCATION AND PSYCHOLOGY (REP)**

Discuss the impact of technology use on socialisation and social relationships	0	0.0	4	7.0	16	28.1	20	$\frac{35}{1}$	17	29.8	3.877	0.927
Identify common attributes of inventors and scientists	0	0.0	3	5.3	8	14.0	23	40	23	40.4	4.158	0.862
Demonstrate scientific ethical behavior in their work	2	3.5	6	10.	15	26.3	20	35	14	24.6	3.667	1.075
<b>LEARNING DOMAIN: Production, Distribution and Consumption</b>												
Identify the economic activities of their area of residence	0	0.0	2	3.5	10	17.5	22	38.	23	40.4	4.158	0.841
Analyze the impact of the economic activities in their area on social life	0	0.0	3	5.3	9	15.8	27	47.	18	31.6	4.053	0.833
Analyse the production, distribution and consumption of the basic products they use	0	0.0	3	5.3	13	22.8	18	$\frac{31}{6}$	23	40.4	4.070	0.923
Develop new ideas on production, distribution and consumption by means of collaboration	2	3.5	4	7.0	18	31.6	20	$\frac{35}{1}$	13	22.8	3.667	1.024
Use their rights as an informed consumer	0	0.0	8	14.0	5	8.8	21	36.	23	40.4	4.035	1.035
<b>LEARNING DOMAIN: Effective Citizenship</b>												
Know the emerging professions based on the economic activities in their area of residence	1	1.8	3	5.3	12	21.1	18	31.6	23	40.4	4.035	0.999
Develop an association between the social needs in their area and the associations providing service to meet these needs	0	0.0	4	7.0	9	15.8	26	45.6	18	31.6	4.018	0.876
Explain the fundamental duties of government units	2	3.5	1	1.8	15	26.3	17	29.8	22	38.6	3.982	1.026
Explain basic reights and the importance of using these rights	0	0.0	2	3.5	14	24.6	24	42.1	17	29.8	3.982	0.834
Value national sovereignty and independence symbols such as the flag and the national anthem	0	0.0	0	0.0	5	8.8	22	38.6	30	52.6	4.439	0.655
<b>LEARNING DOMAIN: Global Connections</b>												
Research the place and importance of the city of their residence in international economic relations	1	1.8	5	8.8	13	22.8	23	40.4	15	26.3	$\frac{3.80}{7}$	0.990
Discuss the impact of communication and transport technology in international economic relations	0	0.0	4	7.0	17	29.8	19	33.3	17	29.8	$\frac{3.86}{0}$	0.934
Explain the importance of tourism in international relations	0	0.0	3	5.3	10	17.5	23	40.4	21	36.8	4.08	0.872
Exemplify common heritage elements present in various countries	1	1.8	7	12.3	20	35.1	16	28.1	13	22.8	3.57	1.034
Research and recommend innovative ideas to meet the needs of the society's interests, wants and needs	2	3.5	8	14.0	21	36.8	15	26.3	11	19.3	$\frac{3.43}{9}$	1.069

When the responses that the participant teachers gave in relation to the achievement levels of the grade 5 social studies course learning outcomes were examined, it was revealed that a total of 34 items were found to be achieved at either a “high” (3.40-4.19) or “very high” (4.20-5.00) level.

When the responses were analyzed by learning domains, it was found that teachers’ levels of agreement for the four learning outcomes in the Individual and Society learning domain was “high”  $4.070 \pm 0.747$  (Min=2; Max=5), for the five learning outcomes in the Culture and Heritage learning domain was “high”  $3.835 \pm 0.815$  (Min=2.2; Max=5), for the five learning outcomes in the People Places and Environment learning domain was “high”  $4.140 \pm 0.649$  (Min=2.6; Max=5), for the five learning outcomes in the Science technology and society learning

domain was “high”  $3.888 \pm 0.782$  (Min=1.8; Max=5), for the five learning outcomes in the Production distribution and consumption learning domain was “high”  $4.003 \pm 0.779$  (Min=2.17; Max=5), for the five learning outcomes in the Effective citizenship learning domain was “high”  $4.105 \pm 0.678$  (Min=2.25; Max=5), and for the five learning outcomes in the Global connections learning domain was “high”  $3.754 \pm 0.826$  (Min=1.4; Max=5).

One of the open-ended questions was as follows: “Do you find the achievement levels of the given learning outcomes of the new grade 5 social studies course sufficient? If not, please explain the reasons.” An analysis of the responses given to this question revealed that 44 of the participant teachers (77%) had stated that the achievement level of the new grade 5 social studies learning outcomes defined in the curriculum was “sufficient”. While 27 of the teachers who stated that it was “sufficient” only used the expression “I find it sufficient”, the remaining 17 teachers stated that they found it “sufficient” but also mentioned some factors that made it difficult to reach the learning outcomes. Among these factors were the textbook not being aligned with the learning outcomes and its insufficiency in meeting the needs with respect to content and activities. Nine of the teachers participating in the study reported that they found the achievement levels of the new grade 5 social studies learning outcomes in the curriculum “insufficient”. They also briefly stated the reasons underlying why they did not find the achievement levels sufficient. These were: an education system based on rote memorization, the abstract nature of the topics, crowded classes, low levels of student readiness, lack of equality in education opportunity, insufficiency of the textbooks and the class hours.

Another open-ended questions was as follows: “Does the achievement level of the given learning outcomes of the new grade 5 social studies course vary by each learning outcome? If so, could you please explain the reasons?” An analysis of the responses given to this question revealed that 55 of the participant teachers (96%) had stated that the achievement level of the new grade 5 social studies learning outcomes defined in the curriculum varied across each learning outcome. This was attributed to such reasons as: differences in students' interests and levels of readiness, the presence of abstract topics, students' background and cultural differences, insufficiency of class hours, whether or not they were related to daily life, and insufficient time given to address each learning outcome.

Finally, based on the responses given to the question “Could you please write the average Term I and Term II scores for the Social Studies classes you taught?”, the first term average score was calculated to be 75.94, while the second term average score was 74.57.

**Results Regarding Achievement Levels of the Grade 5 Social Studies Course Learning Outcomes by Views on the Sufficiency of the Training to Introduce the New Curriculum**

Table 4

*Mean Values of Achievement Levels of the Grade 5 Social Studies Course Learning Outcomes based on Views on the Sufficiency Condition of the Introduction to the New Curriculum*

	<b>Group</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>M</b>	<b>SD</b>	<b>F</b>	<b>p</b>	<b>Diff</b>
Individual and Society	Yes	10	4.050	0.864	2.972	0.060	
	Partially	28	4.286	0.560			
	No	19	3.763	0.848			
Culture and Heritage	Yes	10	3.860	0.654	2.320	0.108	
	Partially	28	4.036	0.768			
	No	19	3.526	0.897			
People Places and Environments	Yes	10	4.100	0.424	0.536	0.588	
	Partially	28	4.229	0.629			
	No	19	4.032	0.775			
Science Technology and Society	Yes	10	3.940	0.517	0.324	0.724	
	Partially	28	3.950	0.812			
	No	19	3.768	0.870			
Production Distribution and Consumption	Yes	10	4.083	0.625	0.819	0.446	
	Partially	28	4.101	0.743			
	No	19	3.816	0.899			
Effective Citizenship	Yes	10	4.175	0.590	4.611	0.014	2>3
	Partially	28	4.321	0.544			
	No	19	3.750	0.777			
Global Connections	Yes	10	3.880	0.744	3.020	0.057	
	Partially	28	3.957	0.795			
	Hayır	19	3.390	0.826			

A significant difference was found in the learning domain of Effective Citizenship based on the sufficiency condition of the training received in the introduction of the new curriculum ( $F=4.611$ ;  $p=0.014<0.05$ ). However, no significant difference was found in the teachers' scores belonging to the learning domains of Individual and Society, Culture and Heritage, People Places and Environments, Science Technology and Society, Production Distribution and Consumption, and Global Connections ( $p>0.05$ ).

**Results Regarding Achievement Levels of the Grade 5 Social Studies Course Learning Outcomes by Method of Participation in the Introduction to the New Curriculum**

Table 5

*Mean Values of Achievement Levels of the Grade 5 Social Studies Course Learning Outcomes by Method of Participation in the Introduction to the New Curriculum*

	<b>Group</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>M</b>	<b>SD</b>	<b>F</b>	<b>p</b>	<b>Difference</b>
Individual and Society	In-service Education	11	4.068	0.571	0.385	0.764	
	Seminar	29	4.112	0.749			
	Meeting	9	3.833	0.935			
	Never Attended	8	4.188	0.810			
Culture and Heritage	In-service Education	11	3.964	0.784	0.663	0.579	
	Seminar	29	3.841	0.772			
	Meeting	9	3.511	0.965			
	Never Attended	8	4.000	0.894			
People, Places and Environments	In-service Education	11	4.109	0.476	2.460	0.073	
	Seminar	29	4.138	0.646			
	Meeting	9	3.778	0.845			
	Never Attended	8	4.600	0.385			
Science, Technology and Society	In-service Education	11	3.746	0.780	1.254	0.300	
	Seminar	29	3.821	0.795			
	Meeting	9	3.844	0.747			
	Never Attended	8	4.375	0.729			
Production, Distribution and Consumption	In-service Education	11	4.152	0.617	1.224	0.310	
	Seminar	29	3.994	0.776			
	Meeting	9	3.611	0.939			
	Never Attended	8	4.271	0.761			
Effective Citizenship	In-service Education	11	4.227	0.467	3.528	0.021	
	Seminar	29	4.164	0.705			1>3
	Meeting	9	3.500	0.685			2>3
	Never Attended	8	4.406	0.481			4>3
Global Connections	In-service Education	11	4.109	0.683	3.822	0.015	
	Seminar	29	3.669	0.779			1>3
	Meeting	9	3.156	0.968			4>3
	Never Attended	8	4.250	0.563			

**Results Regarding Achievement Levels of the Grade 5 Social Studies Course Learning Outcomes by Discipline of Graduation**

Table 6

*Mean Values of Achievement Levels of the Grade 5 Social Studies Course Learning Outcomes by Discipline of Graduation*

	<b>Group</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>M</b>	<b>SD</b>	<b>F</b>	<b>p</b>
Individual and Society	Social Studies Teaching	35	3.971	0.737		
	History Teaching	13	4.308	0.512	0.977	0.383
	Geography Teaching	9	4.111	1.032		
Culture and Heritage	Social Studies Teaching	35	3.749	0.787		
	History Teaching	13	4.123	0.580	1.053	0.356
	Geography Teaching	9	3.756	1.157		
People Places and Environments	Social Studies Teaching	35	4.109	0.616		
	History Teaching	13	4.215	0.538	0.127	0.881
	Geography Teaching	9	4.156	0.942		
Science Technology and Society	Social Studies Teaching	35	3.863	0.742		
	History Teaching	13	3.985	0.831	0.127	0.881
	Geography Teaching	9	3.844	0.942		
Production Distribution and Consumption	Social Studies Teaching	35	3.981	0.770		
	History Teaching	13	4.167	0.660	0.461	0.633
	Geography Teaching	9	3.852	1.002		
Effective Citizenship	Social Studies Teaching	35	4.086	0.694		
	History Teaching	13	4.115	0.609	0.051	0.950
	Geography Teaching	9	4.167	0.781		
Global Connections	Social Studies Teaching	35	3.709	0.864		
	History Teaching	13	3.954	0.612	0.504	0.607
	Geography Teaching	9	3.644	0.974		

No significant difference was found based on discipline of graduation in the teachers' scores belonging to the learning domains of Individual and Society, Culture and Heritage, People Places and Environments, Science Technology and Society, Production Distribution and Consumption, Effective Citizenship and Global Connections ( $p>0.05$ ).

**Results Regarding Achievement Levels of the Grade 5 Social Studies Course Learning Outcomes by Class Size**

Table 7

*Mean Values of Achievement Levels of the Grade 5 Social Studies Course Learning Outcomes by Class Size*

	<b>Group</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>M</b>	<b>SD</b>	<b>F</b>	<b>p</b>
Individual and Society	10-20	23	3.891	0.726		
	21-30	23	4.196	0.822	1.112	0.336
	31-40	11	4.182	0.593		
Culture and Heritage	10-20	23	3.591	0.727		
	21-30	23	3.983	0.882	1.790	0.177
	31-40	11	4.036	0.784		
People Places and Environments	10-20	23	4.235	0.548		
	21-30	23	4.044	0.800	0.491	0.615
	31-40	11	4.146	0.499		
Science Technology and Society	10-20	23	3.870	0.778		
	21-30	23	3.835	0.852	0.251	0.779
	31-40	11	4.036	0.680		
Production Distribution and Consumption	10-20	23	3.971	0.741		
	21-30	23	4.036	0.812	0.039	0.962
	31-40	11	4.000	0.856		
Effective Citizenship	10-20	23	4.011	0.668		
	21-30	23	4.228	0.652	0.636	0.533
	31-40	11	4.046	0.773		
Global Connections	10-20	23	3.609	0.681		
	21-30	23	3.913	0.850	0.783	0.462
	31-40	11	3.727	1.048		

No significant difference was found by class size in the teachers' scores belonging to the learning domains of Individual and Society, Culture and Heritage, People Places and Environments, Science Technology and Society, Production Distribution and Consumption, Effective Citizenship and Global Connections ( $p>0.05$ ).

A significant difference was found in the learning domain of Effective Citizenship based on the method of participating in the introduction of the new curriculum ( $F=3.528$ ;  $p=0.021<0.05$ ). A significant difference is observed in the Effective Citizenship learning domain by method of participating in the introduction of the new curriculum ( $F=3.822$ ;  $p=0.015<0.05$ ). However, no significant difference was found by method of the introduction of the new program in the teachers' scores belonging to the learning domains of Individual and Society, Culture and Heritage, People Places and Environments, Science Technology and Society, and Production Distribution and Consumption ( $p>0.05$ ).

**Results Regarding Achievement Levels of the Grade 5 Social Studies Course Learning Outcomes by Gender**

Table 8

*Mean Values of Achievement Levels of the Grade 5 Social Studies Course Learning Outcomes by Gender*

	Group	N	M	SD	T	p
Individual and Society	Female	21	4.274	0.661	1.594	0.117
	Male	36	3.951	0.776		
Culture and Heritage	Female	21	4.095	0.761	1.882	0.065
	Male	36	3.683	0.817		
People Places and Environments	Female	21	4.381	0.623	2.210	0.031
	Male	36	4.000	0.631		
Science Technology and Society	Female	21	4.295	0.703	3.252	0.002
	Male	36	3.650	0.733		
Production Distribution and Consumption	Female	21	4.468	0.614	3.846	0.000
	Male	36	3.732	0.741		
Effective Citizenship	Female	21	4.262	0.594	1.342	0.185
	Male	36	4.014	0.715		
Global Connections	Female	21	4.067	0.798	2.260	0.028
	Male	36	3.572	0.796		

In terms of gender, significant differences were found in the learning domains of People Places and Environments ( $t(55)=2.210$ ;  $p=0.031<0.05$ ), Science Technology and Society ( $t(55)=3.252$ ;  $p=0.002<0.05$ ), Production Distribution and Consumption ( $t(55)=3.846$ ;  $p=0.000<0.05$ ), Global Connections ( $t(55)=2.260$ ;  $p=0.028<0.05$ ). However, no significant differences were found based on gender in the learning domains of Individual and Society, Culture and Heritage, and Effective Citizenship ( $p>0.05$ ).

**Results Regarding Achievement Levels of the Grade 5 Social Studies Course Learning Outcomes by Teachers' Years of Experience in Teaching**

Table 9

*Achievement Levels Of The Grade 5 Social Studies Course Learning Outcomes By Teachers' Years Of Experience In Teaching*

	<b>Group</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>M</b>	<b>SD</b>	<b>t</b>	<b>p</b>
Individual and Society	10 or Fewer Years	25	3.850	0.750	-2.021	0.048
	11 or More Years	32	4.242	0.708		
Culture and Heritage	10 or Fewer Years	25	3.608	0.799	-1.902	0.062
	11 or More Years	32	4.013	0.795		
People Places and Environments	10 or Fewer Years	25	4.064	0.616	-0.782	0.437
	11 or More Years	32	4.200	0.678		
Science Technology and Society	10 or Fewer Years	25	3.776	0.857	-0.953	0.345
	11 or More Years	32	3.975	0.720		
Production Distribution and Consumption	10 or Fewer Years	25	3.907	0.842	-0.822	0.414
	11 or More Years	32	4.078	0.731		
Effective Citizenship	10 or Fewer Years	25	3.970	0.693	-1.341	0.186
	11 or More Years	32	4.211	0.657		
Global Connections	10 Yıl Ve Altı	25	3.616	0.816	-1.121	0.267
	11 or More Years	32	3.863	0.829		

Based on the teachers' years of experiences in teaching, a significant difference was found in the learning domain of Individual and Society ( $t(55)=-2.021$ ;  $p=0.048<0.05$ ), However, no significant differences were found in the learning domains of Culture and Heritage, People Places and Environments, Science Technology and Society, Production Distribution and Consumption, Effective Citizenship and Global Connections ( $p>0.05$ ).

**Discussion, Conclusion and Suggestions**

Curriculum refers to all the planned in-class or out-of-class learning activities in any one subject. Undoubtedly the most important element of a curriculum is the learning outcomes. The degree to which learning outcomes are achieved is an indication of the extent to which the aim of the curriculum is reached.

In the study, the degree to which the learning outcomes of the new 2017 grade 5 social studies were achieved based on teachers' views was investigated; it was revealed that the learning outcomes were achieved at a "high" level. A study by Kaçar (2009) and a study by Badem (2012) investigated the degree to which the learning outcomes of the grade 6 social studies course and those of the economy and social life units in the grade 7 social studies course were achieved respectively based on teacher views. Both studies revealed that the learning outcomes were achieved at a "moderate" level. Thus, these findings are inconsistent with those revealed in the present study. This difference could be attributed to the different grade levels and the numerous novelties in the new social studies curriculum.

After the responses of the teachers given to statements related to the levels of achievement of the 2017 grade 5 social studies learning outcomes were analysed, it was observed that each of the 34 learning outcomes in the seven learning domains of the new social studies curriculum was achieved at a high or very high level. When each of the learning domains was examined in terms of the learning outcomes, it was observed that the highest degree of

achievement was in the learning domain of “People, Places and Environment”, while the lowest achievement was in the “Global Connections” learning domain. The highest achievement in the learning outcomes of the learning domain of “People, Places and Environments” could be attributed to its relevance to daily life, while the lowest achievement in those of “Global Connections” learning domain could be associated with its being positioned at the end of the academic year; it could be due to the reasons such as the relaxation of students with the warming of the weather. In terms of the learning outcomes, the highest level of achievement was in the learning outcome “Values national sovereignty and independence symbols such as the Flag and the Turkish National Anthem.” This could be attributed to the fact that the Turkish society has a high level of ownership of their national and moral values. On the other hand, the lowest achievement was in the learning outcome “Researches the society’s interests, wants and needs and recommends innovative ideas to meet these.” This could have stemmed from the fact that it was the last learning outcome of the last learning domain; hence, its being addressed at the end of the academic year when the weather warms up could have resulted in some degree of relaxation in the students.

The examination of the responses teachers provided to the open-ended questions related to the achievement of the learning outcomes revealed that teachers found the degree of achievement sufficient with justifications such as the topics and learning outcomes being free of rote memorization, their appropriateness to the grade level and their addressing the needs of the students. Thus, both findings are in consistency, and it can be concluded that the achievement of the learning outcomes was “sufficient” and of a “high” level. However, it can be observed that not all teachers achieved the learning outcomes at the same level. Teachers accounted for this by reporting that factors such as students’ varying levels of readiness, whether the topics were abstract or concrete, the variation in students’ interests and whether or not the topics were related to daily life. For this reason, it is revealed that not all learning outcomes are reached by the students at the same degree.

As for their responses regarding what they did to successfully achieve the learning outcomes, teachers reported that they made more use of educational technologies and course materials, among which was the smart board installed within the scope of the Fatih Project of the Ministry of National Education. In addition, it was revealed that teachers made use of digital technologies and used such education systems as EBA (Education Digital Network), morpa kampüs and okulistik. In addition to these, they stated that they tried to utilize different methods and techniques.

Finally, based on the teachers’ responses to the open-ended question “Could you please write the Term 1 and Term 2 average scores of the Social Studies Course you taught?”, the average scores for Term 1 and Term 2 were found to be 75.94 and 74.57, respectively. Based on these average scores, it can be claimed that the students were rather successful within their grade level and that the learning outcomes were reached at a high level.

Upon examination of the degree of achievement of the learning outcomes of the new 2017 grade 5 social studies based on teachers’ views in relation to whether or not the training received for the introduction to the new curriculum was found sufficient, it was found that teachers found the training partially sufficient. When the literature was examined, it was reported in a study by [Çelikkaya and Kürümlüoğlu \(2018\)](#), titled the Teachers’ Views on the 2017 New Social Studies Curriculum, that the in-service training of teachers was insufficient. This was attributed to the fact that the in-service trainers were not equipped and were insufficient and that the education provided did not address the implementation process of the education. A significant difference was found in the Effective Citizenship

learning domain in relation to finding education received in the new curriculum sufficient. This could be attributed to the fact that Effective Citizenship was not in the previous curriculum and was a new addition to the new curriculum.

When the means of the teachers' participation in an introductory program of the new curriculum in relation to the level of achievement of the learning outcomes of the new grade 5 social studies course were examined, no significant difference was revealed in such learning domains as Individual and Society, Culture and Heritage, People Places and Environments, Science Technology and Society, Production Distribution and Consumption.

A significant difference was found only in the learning domains of Effective Citizenship and Global Connections against the teachers whose type of participation in an introductory program related to the new curriculum was the meeting. The reasons underlying this could be the new addition of the effective citizenship learning domain, the global connections unit being positioned at the end, and the fact that the teachers who had not participated in the introduction of the new curriculum in any way were experienced. Such activities as in-service training, seminar and meeting which were conducted to introduce the new curriculum to the teachers could be said to function as a guide to teachers in achieving the learning outcomes.

When the mean values of the achievement level of the new 2017 grade 5 social studies course learning outcomes were examined by discipline graduated from, no significant difference was observed in such learning domains as Individual and Society, Culture and Heritage, People Places and Environments, Science Technology and Society, Production Distribution and Consumption, Effective Citizenship, and Global Connections. That there was no significant variance based on discipline of graduation was found to be an understandable condition on grounds that the social studies course was a discipline in which history, geography and citizenship content was embedded, that the introduction of the new curriculum was successful, and that most of the teachers were experienced.

When the mean values of the achievement level of the new 2017 grade 5 social studies course learning outcomes were examined by class size, no significant difference was observed in such learning domains as Individual and Society, Culture and Heritage, People Places and Environments, Science Technology and Society, Production Distribution and Consumption, Effective Citizenship, and Global Connections. 81% of the classes of the teachers participating in the present study had either 10-20 or 21-30 students. Thus, it can be stated that the teachers had generally normal class sizes that is classes that were not crowded. It can be deduced that this was the reason underlying the lack of variation among the learning domains by class size.

In addition to teachers' subject matter knowledge and professional features, their gender is also important in reaching educational goals. In the present study when the mean values of the achievement level of the new 2017 grade 5 social studies course learning outcomes were examined by the variable of gender, it was found that female teachers were more successful than male teachers in terms of reaching the learning outcomes. A similar finding was reported in a study by [Kaçar \(2009\)](#) on teachers' views on the achievement level of grade 6 social studies course learning outcomes whereby female teachers' level of reaching the learning outcomes was found to be higher than that of male teachers. The literature on the reasons of the variance by gender have been reviewed; the literature review outcomes are described below.

When the mean values of the achievement level of the new 2017 grade 5 social studies course learning outcomes were examined by gender, no significant difference was observed in such learning domains as Individual and

Society, Culture and Heritage, and Effective Citizenship. Female teachers' highest level of achievement in learning outcomes was in the learning domain of Production Distribution and Consumption, while their lowest level of achievement was in the learning domain of Global Connections. As for male teachers, their highest level of achievement in reaching the learning outcomes was in the learning domain of Effective Citizenship, the lowest was in the learning domain of Global Connections. In addition, when the mean values of the achievement level of the new 2017 grade 5 social studies course learning outcomes were examined by gender, a significant difference was observed in the such learning domains as People Places and Environments, Science Technology and Society, Production Distribution and Consumption, and Effective Citizenship. Based on the the fact that the achievement level of grade 5 social studies learning outcomes varied by gender in some learning domains and considering all the learning domains overall, female teachers are observed to have higher levels of achievement in all the learning domains when compared to male teachers. The reponses to the open-ended questions which the teachers were asked demonstrated that female teachers conducted lessons that were based on hands-on and experiential pedagogies. Moreover, they stated in their responses that they used appropriate methods and techniques. They were found to prefer methods and techniques that made students more active in their learning process, such as drama, role play, educative games and excursion-observation. Thus, female tachers' higher level of success in reaching the learning outcomes than male teachers could be attributed to these factors. However, it would be an inaccurate claim to state that male teachers' achievement level of the learning outcomes was low because male teachers also had a "high" level of achievement in reaching the learning outcomes.

As in all professions, experience is highly important in the teaching profession as well. When the achievement level of the new 2017 grade 5 social studies course learning outcomes were examined by the variable of years of experience in teaching, it was found that teachers with 11 or more years of experience were more successful in reaching the learning outcomes than those with 10 or fewer years of experience. This finding is consistent with that reported in a study titled 'Inexperienced Teacher Behaviors' by Özer et al. (2016). Authors revealed that inexperienced teachers made certain mistakes and experienced challenges, which impacted student success.

When the mean values of the achievement level of the new 2017 grade 5 social studies course learning outcomes were examined by years of experience in teaching, no significant difference was observed in the such learning domains as Culture and Heritage, People Places and Environments, Science Technology and Society, Production Distribution and Consumption, Effective Citizenship, and Global Connections.

It was only in the learning domain of Individual and Society where a significant variance was revealed in favor of teachers with 11 or more years of experience. A general analysis shows that teachers with 11 or more years of experience had higher levels of achievement than those with 10 or fewer years of experience in all the learning domains. This could be attributed to the high degree of professional experience and expertise in the subject matter of the teachers with 11 or more years of experience.

The teachers participating in the present study focused more on the insufficiency of the textbook. They stated that the textbook needed to be reconsidered in all respects. They mentioned negative aspects such as insufficiency in subject content, insufficiency in the exercises/activities provided to students, and excessive use of visual content.

In addition, they stated that the class hours for the subjects of Social Studies and History of Turkish Revolution and Atatürkism were insufficient, and that there was a need to make more use of technology and different methods and techniques in the lessons. They also expressed their view that an education system based on rote memorization and which continuously undergoes changes should be discontinued.

In conclusion, the present study revealed that the participant social studies teachers found the achievement level of the learning outcomes “sufficient” and that the achievement level of the learning outcomes in all the learning domains was “high”. It was observed that female teachers' levels of reaching the learning outcomes was higher than those of male teachers. This could be attributed to the fact that female teachers used teaching methods and techniques by which students learned by being engaged in experiential and hands-on learning experiences, and made effective use of various materials and technologies in their lessons. It was found that experience in teaching was effective in reaching the learning outcomes; accordingly, inexperienced teachers experienced challenges in class management and in reaching the learning outcomes. Discipline of graduation was not found to have a significant effect on achievement levels of the learning outcomes as graduates of social studies teaching and history and geography teaching are similar in terms of both being social studies disciplines. Moreover, it was found that the achievement level of the learning outcomes was higher in classes that were not crowded. It is also evident that content knowledge and general cultural knowledge play an important role in reaching the learning outcomes. The in-service trainings, seminars, and meetings conducted to introduce the new curriculum also had a positive impact. Another finding was that in terms of the new curriculum, teachers believed and made recommendations that textbooks were insufficient and needed to be reconsidered; they complained that the class hours of the Turkish History of Revolution and Atatürkism were insufficient and that the education system was continuously undergoing changes.

### **Recommendations**

1. It was observed that not all students achieved the learning outcomes in grade 5 social studies to the same degree. The teachers who participated in the study answered the question related to this topic by attributing this to students' varied levels of readiness, whether or not the topics were concrete or abstract, students' interests, whether or not the topics were related to daily life and the inadequacy of the class hours. The closer the level of achievement of learning outcomes among students are, the more successful the education offered will be. To achieve this, teachers should implement lessons by paying maximum attention to individual differences in class. Hence, in-service training can be provided to teachers.

2. Negative statements related to textbooks are noticed in the teachers' responses to the open-ended questions of the teachers participating in the study. There are statements that refer to the insufficiency of the textbooks in terms of both content and activities. Hence, these textbooks should be reviewed in all respects. In stead of excessive visual materials, more place should be given to subject content and activities.

3. In their responses to the open-ended questions related to the learning outcomes, participant teachers complained about the insufficiency of the class hours of the Social Studies and the History of Turkish Revolution and Atatürkism courses. Therefore, the Social Studies class hours should be increased by which teachers' anxieties in regards to managing to cover the curriculum can be decreased.

4. In addition to the teachers' views regarding the learning outcomes in the 2017 new grade 5 social studies curriculum, students' views can also be obtained and compared. It is believed that this comparison will make further contributions to the related field.

5. Further studies can be conducted on the achievement level of the learning outcomes in the new 2017 grade 5 social studies curriculum.

### **Ethic**

According to the decision of Tokat Gaziosmanpaşa University Scientific Research and Publication Ethics Committee, dated 22/05/2018 and numbered 27001677-44-E.9967342, this study received ethical approval.

### **Author Contributions**

This study was produced from the master thesis prepared by the second author under the supervision of the first author.

### **Conflict of Interest**

The authors declare that they have no conflict of interest.

### **Funding**

No scholarships or payments have been received from any institution for this article.

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