

# DETERMINING CATEGORICALLY THE VALUES TO TEACH THE CHILDREN IN SOCIAL STUDIES LESSON

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#### ABSTRACT

The purpose of this qualitative research to determine the values teachers wish to bring to them in the Social Studies Lesson they have first in the school and to ensure that those values are classified under specific categories. The research is organized in the framework of phenomenological approach, which is one of the qualitative research methods. The study was conducted in the school year of 2014 – 2015 with the participation of 134 form teachers in total assigned in the city of Isparta. The data in the research was gathered by using semi-structured interview form. The data obtained was analysed by using content analysis technique, which is widely used in qualitative research techniques. According to the findings obtained, the values to give to the students in Social Studies Lesson are classified in two category as intrinsic and extrinsic. Intrinsic values are classified as religious, personal, humanistic, and familial while extrinsic values are classified as environmental, national, knowledge-based, and customary values. This study has shown that it is essential to lay a foundation of a number of values just as soon as children start school.

Keywords: Social studies lesson, value education, form teacher, classification of value

#### INTRODUCTION

There is a close relationship between Social Studies Lesson and education because the purpose of education is to enable a child to adapt to the environment favourably and positively. Social Studies Lesson is the first lesson to fulfil this (Binbaşıoğlu, 2003). The ultimate aim of this lesson is to teach the student the natural and social reality as appropriate for his/her developmental characteristic.

Social Studies Lesson is different from the other lessons and has a privileged importance in that it includes all the values of joint life to the extent of human, society, and nature and it is the backbone among the first semester lessons in which the student starts to form consciously the multi-dimensional relationship pattern, and it is the basis for the second term lessons (Sabancı and Şahin, 2005: 38, in: Uğur, 2006:5).

In this context, Social Studies Lesson serves as an axis course. The other lessons, based on expression and skills, develops around Social Studies Lesson in the first three grades. Social Studies Lesson enables a child to improve holistically in the years of starting school. Wrong and deficient knowledge that a child obtains before starting school is corrected and completed at this stage. Social values that form the essential elements of education and that have ethical quality is given to the children by means of this lesson. Children start sharing the life with teachers that they started learning in the family. An unplanned, unscheduled family education is replaced by a planned, scheduled, and organized education (Özdemir, 1998, in: Uğur, 2006:5).

A child, first of all, is different from adults. Once he is born, he tries to get to know his environment. He gets curious about everything that is going on in the environment. He wants to know and understand the phenomena by asking questions (Sönmez, 1996:73). The best lesson to enable a child to adapt to his environment is Social Studies Lesson and this lesson has to reflect primarily the biological and social authenticity of a child. The adequacy of a child's cognitive, affective, and psychomotor development levels has the quality of a fundamental criterion in forming the subjects and the units in Social Studies Lesson (Topses, 2001:7).

Social Studies Lesson serves as a bridge in value education as well as it is essential in terms of many behaviours to be given to the child. The first place after family that the value education begins is school. Since the first lesson a child has in the school is Social Studies Lesson, this lesson has an important place in value education. After children have attained their first values in the family, the first



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place for them to improve and internalize those values is school. Individuals can change through interactions the values they already have. An individual's school life is of great significance in this process because the process of an individual's gaining the values is formed by school life. At the same time, school is a field of living and learning based on values (Turan and Aktan, 2008). Akbaş (2004) states that in value teaching in primary schools, they use mostly teacher-centred and oral interaction based activities.

A child learns, until he reaches a given age, from his father and mother that form his environment (Aydın, 1993). The school is in the form of a complement and continuation of character formation, included in teaching activities, and citizenship education. Furthermore, the school is responsible for correcting various deficiency and fallacy from the family. For this reason, the responsibility of a school and of a teacher in terms of value education is essential (Akyüz, 1991).

In some studies conducted with relation to giving value education the importance it deserves, it is emphasized that the teacher, the school, and the systems should be in the centre and act together in applying value education (Bryk and Schneider, 2002), that studies to teach value education in the class, in the school, and in the society should be carried out (Refshauge, 2004), and that there is no place more appropriate than school for value education (Snook, 2007).

Considering that teachers, particularly form teachers, have a great impact on children, this should be utilized as a great opportunity in value education because in this period, children are affected by their teachers more than they are by their family. Since students spend their most valuable part of their life in school, teachers have significant responsibilities.

The studies conducted in educational sciences suggests that more qualified and more characterized students can be trained as the qualifications of teachers (personal and professional) increase (Gözütok, 1995; Gürkan, 1993; Mentiş Taş, 2004). For this reason, the fact that primary school students can be successful and characterized in the future depends on whether they love their form teacher or not (Demirel, 2011). If the crowd is too young and we plan to teach something to them, we should affect them first through our character rather than our knowledge (Erden, 2008). When it comes to young individuals and students, it is understood that personal qualities rather than professional skills are important in the person who is in teaching position (Yarar and Tekbıyık, 2009; Krzywacki, 2009).

For the above reasons, the knowledge, skills, and values to be given to the students in Social Studies Lesson are just very important. During this period in which individuals are open to being educated and taught, the values that form teachers give to children play a critical role in laying the foundations of children's future personalities.

### Aim of the Study

The purpose of this qualitative research is to determine and categorize the values that form teachers want the students to gain in the Social Studies Lesson, the first lesson that students have in the school. With this study, attention will be drawn to Social Studies Lesson, which is essential in making permanent the fundamental values gained in the school and in being internalized by the child. Also, it will contribute to further research on value, in terms of its being dealt with from early ages on.



#### METHOD

#### **Research Design**

The research is organized in the framework of phenomenological approach, which is one of the qualitative research methods. The purpose of phenomenological research is to define the different ways that people exhibit in experiencing, interpreting, understanding, or contextualize a given aspect of a phenomenon (Büyüköztürk et al., 2011; Çepni, 2010; Ashworth and Lucas, 1998). In this study, too, phenomenological method is used in order to discover the values that form teachers want the students to gain in Social Studies Lesson.

#### **Study Group**

The research was conducted in the school year of 2014 - 2015 with the participation of 134 form teachers in total assigned in the city of Isparta. The seniority of the form teachers, their ages, and the classes they teach differ. According to Yıldırım and Şimşek (2011), the fact that the researcher knows enough about the individuals who are the source of data is a precaution that increases the external reliability of the research. Personal information belonging to the participants are given in detail in Table 1.

Table 1. Personal attributes of the participants				
Gender	Male		Female	
	59		75	
Location	City Centre		County	
	101		33	
Seniority	0-5 years	6-10 years	11-15 years	16 above years
	16	30	51	37
The class s/he	1 <sup>st</sup> grade	2 <sup>nd</sup> grade	3 <sup>rd</sup> grade	4 <sup>th</sup> grade
teaches	33	27	48	26

### **Data Collection**

How the strategy, which was used in order to increase the reliability of the research, was used was stated clearly and in this way it is predicted that it will enable other researchers to use this strategy similarly (Silverman, 2000; Yıldırım and Şimşek, 2011). The researchers substantially increased the external reliability of the research by reporting the stages they followed elaborately, and also increased the internal reliability of the research by trying to convince the reader of the results of the research through their own perspective and by stating some of the findings as they are (Türnüklü, 2001; Robson, 1999). 3 expert opinions were consulted in order to ensure the reliability of the research. In the comparisons, the number of agreement and disagreement was determined and the reliability of the research was calculated by using Miles and Huberman formula (Reliability = agreement / agreement + disagreement). In the practice of reliability conducted in this specific research, a reliability of 92% was ensured.



#### Analysis of Data

The data obtained were analysed through content analysis technique, which is widely used in qualitative research techniques. The main aim in content analysis is to reach the contexts and interactions in order to present the data obtained. The data were analysed in four stages in content analysis. These are: coding the data, finding the themes, arranging the codes and the themes, defining and interpreting the findings. During the process of coding the data, the researcher tried to divide the data obtained into meaningful parts and to find what each part meant contextually. In the process of finding the themes, codes were brought together and analysed first. Shared points among the codes were expected to be found. Then, codes were categorized and a system was established so as to edit the data obtained. In the last stage, the data obtained were interpreted by means of this system (Yıldırım and Şimşek, 2011).

#### FINDINGS

In this research conducted in order to determine the values to teach the students in Social Studies Lesson according to teachers' opinions, these findings below were obtained after examining the answers from the interview form that the participants filled in:

Classification	Types of Values	Frequency
	Environmental values	6
External	National values	21
Values	Knowledge-based values	20
	Customary values	18
	Religious values	2
Internal Values	Personal values	28
	Humanistic values	35
	Familial values	4

**Table 2:** The values to be taught according to the participants' opinions

In Table 2, the values were formed out of the answers of the participants and the classification of those values are done and their frequency numbers were stated. Values were grouped in terms of external (n=65) and internal (n=69). Among the external values, national values (n=21) and knowledge-based values (n=20) were stated the most while among the internal values, humanistic values (n=35) and personal values (n=28) were stated the most. In the external values, the fact that the person was affected both by himself and by others was taken into account. However, in the internal values, the fact that the person was affected more by himself was taken into account.

### Findings Oriented to the External Values

In this section, the values are included which are expected to be taught to students in Social Studies Lesson and which affect the students more with external aspect. These are grouped under the name of: national, knowledge-based, customary, and environmental values.

Value	Frequency
Protecting historical values	3
National consciousness	3
Protecting the state	1
Being sensitive to government of the country	1
Being patriotic	2

**Table 3.** Findings oriented to national values



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Possessing national feelings	5	
Possessing historical awareness	1	
Knowing Atatürk	2	
Being beneficial for the country	2	
Protecting the social order	1	

In Table 3, the frequency numbers of the values grouped under the name of national values were stated. Among the national values grouped with the participation of 21 people in total, *possessing national feelings* (n=5) was uttered the most.

According to form teachers' views, the country that people live in affects the formation of values. People correlate emotionally with the place they live in and their past. Because of that correlation, the feeling of national integrity develops. Besides, such moral values as the past national values, customs and traditions, culture, our ancestors, patriotism, national consciousness, and nationalism are also involved (Acat and Aslan, 2012; Kale, 2004; Ercan, 2001).

Table 4. Findings	oriented to k	nowledge	e-based va	alues
Value			Frequency	
Being able to teach what is needed conditions are provided	d when the r	necessary	2	
History			1	
Geography			1	
How to teach catching fish instead of gi	ving fish		3	
General knowledge			1	
Being the life itself, not being close to i	t		4	
Skills			1	
Increasing the power of interpretation			2	
Knowledge to use in real life			3	
Being successful			2	
		1000		

In Table 4, the frequency numbers of the values grouped under the name of knowledge-based values were stated. Among the knowledge-based values grouped with the participation of 20 people in total, the idea of *being the life itself, not being close to it* (n=4) was included the most. According to the views of the participants, Social Studies Lesson is effective in that it is the first lesson that students have in the school. Children should be able to regard the school as a part of life itself and transfer what they learn in the school to life easily. If the principle of teaching from close environment to far environment can be applied properly in the process of teaching in that lesson, children will be able to regard the school as the life itself.

People do not accept things as they are while they are forming their value judgement. They learn by reasoning especially the values based on knowledge. For this reason, in Social Studies Lesson, environments in which children can gain knowledge by searching and internalizing should be provided, not environments in which children gain knowledge directly as it is. Also, in this lesson, the same sensitivity that is displayed in teaching the students to be honest, to behave respectfully, to be helpful and tolerant should also be displayed in teaching knowledge-based values. Knowledge-based values were addressed in value research by some researchers (Schwartz, 1992; Acat and Aslan, 2012).

Tuble 5.1 mangs offented to customary values		
Value	Frequency	
Culture	1	
Rules of good manners	2	
Our customs and traditions	1	
Value judgements	7	
Values for us to use in real life	3	
The desire to live together	1	
Our social duties	1	

**Table 5.** Findings oriented to customary values



The structure of the society	1	
Commitment	1	
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In Table 5, the frequency numbers of the values grouped under the name of customary values were stated. Among customary values grouped with the participation of 18 people in total, the value that goes as teaching *value judgements* (n=7) was included the most.

In accordance with the views of the teachers, another one of the values to be taught to students in Social Studies Lesson was grouped as customary values. Such feelings as culture, rules of good manners, our customs and traditions, and commitment are the ones people care about. These feelings are included in the fundamental values, like national values, which are both fed by the past and shaped by the developments today. If we teach the students our customs and traditions, which most people in our society tries to protect and which have a significant place in ensuring the continuity of societies, we can surely increase the awareness of students. Therefore, we raise a more conscious and a more sensitive generation. Although customary traditions are not under this name in a great deal of research, it is listed under such names as national, cultural, and public (Schwartz, 1992; Ercan, 2001; Kale, 2004; Canatan, 2004; Acat and Aslan, 2012).

<b>Table 6.</b> Findings oriented to environmental values					
Value				Frequency	
Knowing his environment better				4	
Respect for living beings				1	
Awareness of a healthy life				1	

In Table 6, the frequency numbers of the values grouped under the name of environmental values were stated. Among environmental values grouped with the participation of 6 people in total, the value that goes as *knowing his environment better* (n=4) was included the most.

When we say value, the first things that come to mind are a person's self-oriented or interactionoriented attitudes and behaviours. However, there are also values that people should conserve like being sensitive to the environment, protecting the animals, embracing the nature. The perception of value towards people will eventually exhibit itself towards other living beings. A new perception of value that was not included in value research and that may shed light on future value research has emerged.

### Findings Oriented to the Internal Values

In this section, the values are included which are expected to be taught to students in Social Studies Lesson and which affect the students more with internal aspect. These are grouped under the name of humanistic, personal, familial, and religious values.

Value	Frequency
The benefits of being different	1
Responsibility	4
Fairness	2
Humanity	1
Being honest	5
Being tolerant	9
Not being able to understand people if empathy is not developed	1
Respect for the elderly	1
Love for the youngsters	1
To love is the most beautiful thing in the world	2
The fact that we will be subject to the same thing if we do not show	1
respect	

**Table 7.** Findings oriented to humanistic values



A respectful individual of society	1	
The danger of selfishness	1	
Being a good person	2	
How the relationships with people should be	1	
The fact that race, religion, and language discrimination is wrong	1	
Loyalty	1	

In Table 7, the frequency numbers of the values grouped under the name of humanistic values were stated. Among humanistic values grouped with the participation of 35 people in total, the value that goes as *being tolerant* (n=9) was included the most.

Considering the values listed in the table in accordance with the views of the participants, it can be said that there are some values that both increase a person's self-respect and shapes their adaptation to the society. With the value given to people gaining importance in the humanistic society, one can tell that the views are increasing as to teach those values to children from the early ages on. If the children who already gained and internalized those values can combine this with knowledge-based values, then it will be much more meaningful. Humanistic values have always been accepted by the society and taken its place among the classifications of values (Rokeach, 1973; Lickona, 1991; Schwartz, 1992; Acat and Aslan, 2012).

Table 8. Finding	gs oriented to	personal v	alues	
Value			Frequency	
Knowing oneself			1	
Self-respect			2	
Sensitive individuals			3	
Knowing that s/he is precious			5	
Communication			2	
Leadership			1	
Professional awareness			1	
Individuals who are ready for life			1	
Being aware of his/her own existence			4	
Living freely and independently			1	
Happiness			1	
How to cope with the difficulties in life			2	
Socializing			3	
Being able to see the future			1	

In Table 8, the frequency numbers of the values grouped under the name of personal values were stated. Among humanistic values grouped with the participation of 28 people in total, the value that goes as *Knowing that s/he is precious* (n=5) was included the most.

The values listed in the table in line with the views of the participants can be said to be personal or self-oriented. As is known, values have both an internal and an external aspect. It is hard to distinguish between them because the feelings of human beings are affected by every change since they are a social being. Internal feelings can affect external effect or vice versa. Thus, considering a person as a whole will always make the correct interpretation easier.

Such values as knowing oneself, feeling self-respect, being sensitive, feeling oneself as precious, communicating effectively, being happy are among the ones that most people adopt and want to see in themselves. We can consider these values among the fundamental values that make us human and create personality. If we can teach the students those values in Social Studies Lesson, we can see happier individuals in the future. When we examine the research on classification of values, we can see that personal or self-oriented values are involved (Nelson, 1974, in: Naylor and Diem, 1987; Acat and Aslan, 2012).



Table 9. Findings oriented to familial values

Value	Frequency
Reinforcing the values gained in the family	1
The importance of the family	3

In Table 9, the values grouped under the name of familial values were listed. Among the familial values grouped with the participation of 4 people in total, the value that goes as *Knowing the importance of the family* (n=3) was included the most.

When we look at the views of the participants, one of the most important values in society is familial values because a person interacts with the family members firstly and gain his first values here in the family. Then he internalizes those values by transferring them to society and by interacting with new people. Therefore, children should be made to feel the importance of family in Social Studies Lesson, which is the first lesson that they have in the school. Familial values are emphasized by various researchers in value research (Schwartz, 1992; Kale, 2004; Canatan, 2004; Acat and Aslan, 2012).

Table 10. Finding oriented to religious values			
Value	Frequency		
Not telling lies		1	
Justice and equality		1	

In Table 10, the frequency numbers of the values grouped under the name of religious values were stated. When we look at the answers of the participants, we can see the values that are included in in the table are religious-based values. Values are composed of a number of components, an important one of which is religion. To be more precise, it is known that values are fed by religion and religious factors dominate values. The foundation of many values such as justice, honesty, tolerance, love, responsibility, helpfulness, and respect are fed by religion. Religious values have always been included in a lot of research in which classification of values are carried out (Lickona, 1991; Spranger, in: Akbaş, 2004; Schwartz,1992; Güngör, 1998; Acat and Aslan,2012). In Social Studies Lesson, it would be beneficial to teach firstly the religious values in order to teach them other values properly.

### **CONCLUSION and DISCUSSION**

In this research conducted in order to determine and categorize the values to teach the students in Social Studies Lesson, these results were attained in accordance with the findings obtained from the answers of the form teachers:

The outlook for values in our changing and developing society can change in time an new perception of values can emerge. The importance of the research conducted for this situation is increasing (Gündüz, 2014; Uzunkol, 2014; Ülger, 2012; Tahiroğlu, 2011; Çengelci, 2010; Yiğittir, 2009; Aladağ, 2009; Keskin, 2008; Ulusoy, 2007; Dilmaç, 2007; Akbaş, 2004).

When the literature is examined, it can be seen that there are various research in which classification of value is carried out both in Turkey (Güngör, 1998; Ercan, 2001; Kale, 2004; Canatan, 2004; Acat and Aslan, 2012) and throughout the world (Rokeach, 1973; Nelson, 1974, in: Naylor and Diem, 1987; Lincona, 1991; Schwartz, 1992; Spranger, in: Akbaş, 2004). However, it is still impossible to talk about a definite value classification accepted by everyone (Aslan, 2011).

In this research, too, the values to be taught to children in the Social Studies Lesson, their first lesson in the school, were determined and classified in terms of certain categories. At the end of the classification, the values to be taught were grouped under two categories, which are internal values



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and external values. While considering this criterion, much attention was paid to the fact that the children were affected more by themselves internally rather than by the value to be taught whereas the same attention was paid to the fact that the children not only were affected by themselves but also their adaptation to the society was made easier. As a matter of fact, these are two factors that complement each other. If we can teach children these values within Social Studies Lesson, not only will the children be happier but their interaction with people will be made easier.

Under the name of internal values basic category, religious values (Lickona, 1991; Spranger, in: Akbaş, 2004; Schwartz, 1992; Güngör, 1998; Acat and Aslan, 2012), personal values (Nelson, 1974, in: Naylor and Diem, 1987; Acat and Aslan, 2012), humanistic values (Rokeach, 1973; Lickona, 1991; Schwartz, 1992; Acat and Aslan, 2012), and familial values (Schwartz, 1992; Kale, 2004; Canatan, 2004; Acat and Aslan, 2012) are included. These values are the perception of values that make an individual happier, that form their purpose of living, that give feedback to people individually, and that are the underlying property of creating temperament and character. Considering that children's personalities start to form in early ages, teaching of these values to children will not only increase the individuals' personal happiness but also the children will not feel strange towards the society. Thus, firstly in Social Studies Lesson but in other lesson, too, if we teach children only in a knowledge-based way and ignore affective domain, we can enable them to be higher only in terms of cognitive aspect, but the knowledge which is not equipped with feelings will not make a person feel happy for a long time.

Under the name of external values basic category, national values (Acat and Aslan, 2012; Kale, 2004; Ercan, 2001), knowledge-based values (Schwartz, 1992; Acat and Aslan, 2012), and customary values (Schwartz, 1992; Ercan, 2001; Kale, 2004; Canatan, 2004; Acat and Aslan, 2012) are included. These values do no directly affect a person internally, but contribute to the internalization of internal values through its external aspect. Considering a person as a whole, internal feelings can affect external effect or vice versa. Thus, while teaching values to children, it would be better to do this without separation and by creating awareness. For a child who does not love the country, the nationality, the past values, our ancestors, and our customs and traditions, such internal values as love, tolerance, helpfulness, honesty will not form easily. As a result, feelings and behaviours both will affect a person as the two are interrelated.

Another dimension is that new values to be taught to children in school can emerge in the structure society that is always changing and developing (Acat and Aslan, 2012). Although every classification of value in this context can shed light on the improvement of this field, it is still impossible to talk about a definite value classification accepted by everyone (Aslan, 2011). Since values can affect one another, it is essential to keep in mind that the same value can be a part of more than one group (Şen, 2007) because perception of value is open to be examined from different perspectives as it is affective and relative.

In conclusion, this study has suggested that a great many values in line with the conditions of an everchanging and ever-developing society can be taught to children in primary schools under the name of Social Studies Lesson. While teaching those values, we had better act consciously about the situation that the value involved will provide the student. We can say that Social Studies Lesson is an appropriate environment to teach values more consciously by being aware of the classifications of value after considering the questions of "Where will the child use that value?", "By which aspect will he use it?", "Which values are close to each other?", "Which values are more beneficial for increasing his self-respect?", and "Which values are necessary in order to live happily among people?"



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