



## An Overview of Social Studies in Primary Education: A Meta Synthesis Study

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### Abstract

The aim of this review is to conduct a meta-synthesis of primary school social studies education. This meta-synthesis review interprets and evaluates qualitative data, analyzes the results of the studies in question and presents similarities and differences. Data collection started on 10 October 2017 and continued until the completion of the article (June 30, 2018). The most recent studies were included in the sample. The result shows that studies focus mostly on curriculum evaluation, subject/unit analysis and values education. Curriculum evaluation studies mostly analyze the social studies curricula of first to fifth grade while they tackle the subjects of critical thinking standards, family, democracy, children's literature and social studies in basic education very little. Qualitative studies on primary school social studies education are mostly action, case study or phenomenological studies whereas there are very few ethnographic studies or studies based on grounded theory addressing the same topic. Moreover, most of those studies use content analysis and descriptive analysis or do not specify analysis methods that they employ. The results suggest that efforts should be directed towards the implementation of the program in primary school social studies education. Therefore, primary school social studies research focuses mostly on curriculum evaluation but fails to provide insight into how curricula are put into practice. It is, therefore, recommended that further research be conducted on the practical aspect of primary school social studies curricula. These studies should select appropriate methods and techniques and focus on concept teaching and misconceptions in primary school social studies education. Values education should be integrated with literary works that contain cultural elements and society values.

### Keywords

Primary School Education  
Social Studies  
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## Introduction

Futurists made interesting prediction in the World Economic Forum held in January 2018: Robot automation will take 800 million jobs by 2030 (URL1, 2018). Today, artificial intelligence is a widespread phenomenon in almost all areas of life, such as formal education, lifelong education. AI brings together, which is itself interdisciplinary, and the learning sciences (education, psychology, neuroscience, linguistics, sociology, and anthropology) to promote the development of adaptive learning environments (Surendra, 2014) and education is an important requirement for promoting sustainable development (Becker et al., 2017; Tuomi, 2018). Education experts have predicted that robots will replace teachers in the future in Ireland's Yearbook of Education and also it stated in Science for Policy report by the Joint Research Centre (JRC), the European Commission's science and knowledge service. When education is evaluated in terms of improving social diseases of all nations and improving nation building, it can be said that preparing qualified teachers is a global concern (Goodwin & Kosnik, 2013). However, some questions still remain unanswered: How could robot teachers be of help to low motivated and rebellious students? In other words, teaching is described as touching hearts (Tüfekci & Ural, 2015) and emotional intelligence is a critical component of education, so, how could robot teachers demonstrate empathy and perceive their students' emotions?

Teachers are intellectual and emotional role models for students (Bernard, 2004). Primary school teachers touch their students' hearts and play a significant role in social engineering (Atanur Baskan, Aydın, & Madden, 2006). Primary school teachers not only have professional responsibilities such as selection and use of classroom materials and teaching methods, determination of activities, and organization of classroom environment but also should develop high-level skills which may include mentoring teachers to help their students develop mentally and intellectually (Albu, 2015; Cerit, 2008; Jaiyeoba, 2011; Tekişik, 1998). This high-level skills described in OECD report such as teachers need to be well-versed in the subjects they teach in order to be adept at using different methods and, if necessary, changing their approaches to optimize learning, need to acquire strong skills in technology and the use of technology as an effective teaching tool, need to be able to work in highly collaborative ways, working with other teachers, professionals and para-professionals within the same organization, or with individuals in other organizations, networks of professional communities and different partnership arrangements (Schleicher, 2012). In addition to these, teacher qualifications have been highlighted in recent years (DeAngelis & Presley, 2011; Gudmundsdottir & Hatlevik, 2018). Özpınar and Sarpkaya (2010) state that aside from determining the class environment and course content, primary school teachers have a great impact on students' lives because they shape the education which makes social change possible.

Primary school education includes the disciplines of Literature, Science, Mathematics, Visual Arts, Play and Physical Activities, Music and Social Studies, and plays a critical role in the development of students. Therefore, science, art and social disciplines should be introduced to students during this period. Students who learn about different disciplines and develop skills become more and more prepared for life. In the November 1970 issue of Social Education, Barth and Shermis proposed that the social studies be perceived in terms of three historical traditions: Social studies as Citizenship Transmission (CT), as Social Science (SS), and as Reflective Inquiry (RI) (Barth & Shermis, 1970). As "citizenship transmission", social studies course is one of the most important courses that makes students good citizens who contribute to society (Seefeldt, Castle, & Falconer, 2014). In doing so, it combines values education for character and personality development with academic knowledge and skills (Seefeldt et al., 2014). It consists of different disciplines and integrates three different teaching

dimensions; citizenship transmission, social science and reflective inquiry (Barr, Barth & Shermis, 2013). The National Council for Social Studies (NCSS, 2009) suggests that primary school learning and teaching activities be meaningful, integrative, value-based, engaging and active. Social studies education focuses on the duties and obligations of citizens and the use of high-level thinking skills in solving problems. This, in turn, affects the social structure and provides social integration (Garwood, McKenna, Roberts, Ciullo, & Shin, 2019; Huck, 2019). Therefore, activities performed in social studies course, which is considered classroom education, are of paramount importance.

Social studies has been an important part of education for a long time. The Orkhon inscriptions are important historical installations that address state administration and human development in Turkish history. Social studies involving human development, Turkish culture, citizenship and history education can be based on these works (Yalçınkaya & Uslu, 2015). Kınalızade Ali Efendi, an important scientist of his era, studied at the Sahn-ı Seman madrasah founded by Fatih Sultan Mehmet and continued his works in different cities and levels. In his book titled *Ahlak-ı Ala-i*, Kınalızade Ali Efendi described in detail the characteristics that a good citizen should have (Çürük, 2015). Even though the term “social studies” was not used, social studies education has been given throughout history to turn students into ideal citizens. The United States Department of Education first introduced the social studies course in the curriculum in 1916. The NCSS (National Council for the Social Studies of the United States) set the curriculum standards in 1994 (Bilgili, 2010; Tassinari, 1974). In Turkey, the social studies course was introduced in the curriculum in 1968.

Social studies has taken its current form with the changes made in line with the requirements of the era since 1968. Research in the last decade has addressed books and curricula on social studies education (Brophy & Alleman, 2009; Chu, 2017; Coşkun Keskin & Keskin, 2009; Çatak, 2015; Kaz, 2013; Koçoğlu, 2012; Ünal & Özmen, 2012), different methods and techniques in social studies (Alarcon, Holmes, & Bybee, 2015; Bolat, 2016; Campbell, 2016; Johnson, Liu, & Goble, 2015; Mobley & Fischer, 2014; Nayci, 2017; Selanik Ay, 2010; Sell & Griffin, 2017), teachers’, students’ and preservice teachers’ views of subjects and concepts related to social studies (Bal İncebacak & Tangülü, 2015; Bozkurt, 2013; Brownlee, Scholes, Walker, & Johansson, 2016; Coşkun, 2011; Gülmüş, 2015; Şeyihoğlu & Kartal, 2010; Ucus, 2018). There is, however, no research qualitatively analyzing activities performed in primary school social studies in national and international literature which was reached. Akaydın and Kaya (2015) made a descriptive analysis of studies (in national and international journals) on natural science and social studies course and made recommendations about how to examine the qualitative dimension of these studies. Therefore, this study is the first meta-synthesis research on primary school social studies education.

Primary education determines the caliber and qualification of the young generation that will lead the future. Studies on primary school education should, therefore, be analyzed, and prospects for further research should be determined. Qualitative studies on primary school social studies education are important. Qualitative research on meaning making processes is also important in order to examine the structure of social studies bringing different disciplines together and focusing on rich range of different perspectives of people. Carrying out more qualified and comprehensive research will not only improve primary school social studies education but also ensure that primary school activities respond to students’ needs. A variety of studies, samples sizes, limitations, objectives, methods, data collection tools and results will pave the way for further research in this field.

The aim of this review is to conduct a meta-synthesis of primary school social studies education. The main problem of the review is "What is the current status of research in the field of primary school social studies education?" The sub-problems are as follows:

- Which areas do studies on primary school social studies education varied on?
- What methods (research design, sampling, data collection) are used in those studies?
- How is the data analysis process (data analysis, validity and reliability) undertaken by those studies?
- What are the results of those studies?
- What are the recommendations related to the results of the studies on primary school social studies education?

### *Limitations*

This meta-synthesis review is limited to 41 qualitative studies conducted in Turkey and the world between 2008 and 2018. Selected databases were reviewed. The literature review showed that there are also studies using mixed methods, which means that these studies use both qualitative and quantitative research designs. However, this review only includes studies that use qualitative method. Therefore, those that employed mixed methods were not included in the sample. This review included studies written in Turkish or English only.

## **Method**

### *Research Design*

In qualitative research, researcher uses inductive methodology, focuses on meaning-making processes and attaches great importance to interpreting the complexity of a situation (Creswell, 2014). Data analysis in qualitative research, therefore, varies depending on the nature of the data, which is also observed in content analysis studies. Content analysis studies are categorized as meta-analysis, meta-synthesis (thematic content analysis) and descriptive content analysis (Çalık & Sözbilir, 2014). This meta-synthesis review interprets and evaluates qualitative data, analyzes the results of the studies in question and presents similarities and differences (Polat & Ay, 2016).

### *Data Collection*

Data collection started on 10 October 2017 and continued until the completion of the article (June 30, 2018). The most recent studies were included in the sample. First, English and Turkish keywords were determined. The Turkish keywords "İlkokul," "İlköğretim," "Dördüncü Sınıf" and "Sosyal Bilgiler Eğitimi," and the English keywords "Primary School," "Elementary School", "K-12", "Fifth Class", "5<sup>th</sup> Class", "Fourth Class," "4<sup>th</sup> Class" and "Social Studies Education" were used. EBSCOhost, Council of Higher Education (CoHE) Thesis Center, Turkish Academic Network and Information Center (ULAKBIM), Dergipark, ELSEVIER Scopus, JSTOR, ProQuest Dissertations & Theses, SAGE Premier Journals, Palgrave Macmillan Journals, SpringerLink, Taylor & Francis and Wiley databases were screened. The studies included in this review were articles, theses or reports. Studies that were not accessible were not included in the sample. Some studies presented as reports have also been published as articles. Therefore, their article forms were included in the sample.

Especially the studies published between 2008 and 2018 were selected to identify changes and developments in the field of primary school social studies education in the last decade and to provide teachers and researchers with information on studies in this field. The inclusion criteria for studies conducted in Turkey were: 1) being conducted between 2008 and 2012; and 2) sample size consisting of fourth- or fifth-graders. The inclusion criteria for international studies were: 1) being conducted between 2008 and 2018; and 2) grades corresponding to primary school level. Studies with samples of classroom teachers or preservice classroom teachers were also included in the sample. Mixed studies with samples of social studies teachers or preservice social studies teachers together with classroom teachers or preservice classroom teachers were not included in the sample. The resulting sample consisted of 26 articles and 15 theses (national: 13; international: 28). Table 1 provides an overview of the studies.

**Table 1.** An Overview of Studies

Year of Publication	Articles				Theses	
	SSCI	ISI	International Other	National	Master's	PhD
2008	-	-	-	-	-	-
2009	SM4	-	UTM8	-	TZYL26	-
2010	SM2	-	-	-	-	TZD25
2011	-	-	-	-	TZYL22	-
2012	-	-	UTM9, UTM10, UM11, UTM12	-	-	UTZD40, UTZD41, UTZD36, UTZD37
2013	-	-	UTM27, UTM14	-	TZYL21	UTZD38
2014	-	-	-	-	TZYL24	-
2015	SM5	ISI19, ISI20	UTM7, UTM13, UTM34	UM3	TZYL15, TZYL16	-
2016	SM1	ISI18, ISI32	UTM33	TRM6	-	TZD23, UTZD35, UTZ39
2017	-	ISI17	UTM29, UTM30, UTM31	-	-	-
2018	-	ISI28	-	-	-	-

(SSCI Article: SM; ISI Article: ISI; International-TR Indexed Article: UTM; National-TR Indexed Article: TRM; International Indexed Article: UM; National Master's Thesis: TZYL; National PhD Thesis: TZD; International PhD Thesis: UTZD)

### *Analysis, Credibility and Consistency*

Data were analyzed using inductive content analysis. Table 2 summarizes the studies.

**Table 2.** Data Summary Table

Publication Year of Code	Sample Size	Subject Matter	Purpose and Significance	Design	Data Collection Tool	Data Analysis Method	Credibility and Consistency	Results
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The studies were coded and classified as thesis and article. The theses were further classified as master's thesis and PhD thesis while the articles were further classified as national, international, SCI and ISI articles. The classification is as follows:

**Table 3.** Classification of Studies

Type	Code
SSCI Article	SM
ISI Article	ISI
International-TR Indexed Article	UTM
National-TR Index Indexed Article	TRM
International Index Article	UM
National Master's Thesis	TZYL
National PhD Thesis	TZD
International PhD Thesis	UTZD

The studies were examined in about five months. Notes were taken for each study and a table was generated. The data were analyzed and checked over and over again by the researcher on different dates to avoid data loss. Data were coded and presented in themes. An expert in qualitative research on social studies and geography education and another expert in the field of class education were consulted to develop the codes and themes. Based on expert opinion, corrections and modifications were made in 19.06.2018 to the codes and themes that were developed by the researcher in 28.04.2018. The studies were reclassified according to the type of index and thesis. The heading "sample selection" was added to the study. Analysis, data collection tools and sample were grouped under the same heading. Modifications were made to the codes and themes. The studies were further classified into two groups (design specified and design unspecified) according to the research design used. Changes were made to the themes of the data on the sample. Table 4 shows the modification process.

**Table 4.** Modification Process during Data Collection and Analysis

Date	Steps
10.10.2017	Screening databases
12.04.2018	End of screening databases
15.04.2018	Data analysis
28.04.2018	Developing first codes and themes and presenting them to experts
02.06.2018	Making modifications and changes to the codes and themes based on experts' feedback
19.06.2018	Additions and corrections were made to the codes and themes based on experts' feedback
30.06.2018	One last scan of databases and current additions
24.12.2018	Finalizing the codes and themes in accordance with expert opinions and presenting the findings

## Results

This section presents the findings separately for each sub-problem.

### *Subject Areas of Studies on Primary School Social Studies Education*

Table 5 presents the findings for the first sub-problem.

**Table 5.** Subject Areas of Studies on Primary School Social Studies Education

Themes	Codes	Studies
Curriculum Review/Assessment	All Curricula (Grades 1-5)	UM3, SM4, SM5, UTZD39
	Critical Thinking Standards	ISI32
	Democracy	UTM10
	Family	UM11
	Children's Literature	UTZD40
	Social Studies in Basic Education	UTZD38
Subject/Unit-based Studies	Local Community Studies	TZD25
	Migration	UTM29
	History Topics	TZYL16
	Global Citizenship	UTM31
	Benefitting from Civil Society Organizations	UTM33
	Cultural Education and Heritage	UTZD36
	Technology in Daily Life	UTM7
	Global Education	TZYL21
Values Education	Teacher Opinion	TZYL15, UTM27
	Responsibility/Historical Heritage	TZYL22
	Peace Education	UTM8
	Family	UTM9
	Critical Value Paradigm/Active Citizenship	SM1
Studies on Skills	Creative Thinking	ISI28
	Making Decisions	UTZD37
	Disciplinary Literacy	ISI18
	Applying Visual Literacy	ISI19
	Historical Thinking	UTZD41
Methods/Techniques	From Primary Sources	ISI17
	Choosing a Debate Topic	TRM6
	Mind Mapping	SM2
	-	ISI20
	Portfolio Use	TZYL24
Concept Teaching	Culture	TZYL26
	Multiculturalism and Democracy	UTM30
	-	TZD23
Literature Screening (program)	Meta-Synthesis	UTM34
	Teacher Autonomy (in Exams)	UTZD35
Detection of Misconceptions	Natural Disasters	UTM12
	Information on Citizenship	UTM13

The subject areas of the studies were grouped under 9 themes: *Curriculum Review/Assessment*, *Subject/Unit-based Studies*, *Values Education*, *Studies on Skills*, *Teaching Studies*, *Methods/Techniques*, *Concept Teaching*, *Literature Screening (program)* and *Detection of Misconceptions*. The codes *All Curricula (Grades 1-5)*, *Critical Thinking Standards*, *Democracy*, *Family*, *Children's Literature* and *Social Studies in Basic Education*

stand out in the theme *Curriculum Review/Assessment*. The codes *Local Community Studies, Migration, History Topics, Global Citizenship, Benefiting from NGOs, Cultural Education and Heritage, Technology in Daily Life and Global Education* were emphasized in the theme *Subject/Unit-based Studies*. The codes *Teacher Opinion, Responsibility/Historical Heritage, Peace Education, Family and Critical Value Paradigm/Active Citizenship* stand out under the theme *Values Education*.

#### **Methods of Studies on Primary School Social Studies Education**

This section presents the findings for the second sub-problem. The findings are presented under the headings of research design (Table 6), sampling (Table 7) and data collection (Table 8).

**Table 6.** Research Design of Studies on Primary School Social Studies Education

Themes	Codes	Studies
Design Specified	Action Research	ISI18, TZD23, TZYL24, TZD25, TZYL26
	Case Study	TZYL15, ISI28, UTZD37, UTZD38, UTZD41
	Phenomenology	UTM7, TZYL21, UTM31, UTZD35
	Descriptive Research	TZYL22, UTM30, UTM33, UTM34
	Screening	UM11, TZYL16
	Historical Method	UTM8, UTM10
	Ethnographic Research (Culture Analysis)	UTZD36
Design Unspecified	Grounded Theory	UTM9
	-	SM1, SM2, UM3, SM4, SM5, TRM6, UTM12, UTM13, UTM14, ISI17, ISI19, ISI20, UTM27, UTM29, ISI32, UTZD39, UTZD40

The research designs were grouped under two themes: *Design Specified* and *Design Unspecified*. The codes under the theme *Design Specified* were *Action Research, Case Study, Phenomenology, Descriptive Research, Screening, Historical method, Ethnographic Research (Culture Analysis)* and *Grounded Theory*.

**Table 7.** Samples of Studies on Primary School Social Studies Education

Themes	Codes	Studies
Individual	Classroom Teachers	SM1, SM2, TZYL15, TZYL16, TZYL21, UTM27, ISI28, UTM31, UTZD35, UTZD38, UTZD40, UTZD41
	Primary School 5th Grade Students	UTM12, UTM13, UTM14, ISI17, TZYL22, TZD25, UTZD36
	Primary School 4th Grade Students	UTM7, TZD23, TZYL24, TZYL26, UTM29, UTM31, UTZD36
	Preservice Classroom Teachers	TRM6, ISI18, ISI19, ISI20, UTM33, UTZD37
	Primary School 3rd Grade Students	UTZD41
	Primary School 2nd Grade Students	TZYL24
Document	Event Products/Curriculum Reviews	UM3, SM4, SM5, UTM8, UTM9, UTM10, UM11, UTM30, ISI32, UTM34, UTZD39

The findings for the samples of the studies were grouped under two themes: *Individual* and *Document*. The codes *Classroom Teachers, Primary School 5th Grade Students, Primary School 4th Grade Students, Preservice Classroom Teachers, Primary School 3rd Grade Students* and *Primary School 2nd Grade Students* were under the theme *Individual* while the code *Event Products/Curriculum Reviews* was under the theme *Document*.



**Table 8.** Data Collection Tools of Studies on Primary School Social Studies Education

Themes	Codes	Studies
Document	Curricula	UM3, SM4, SM5, UTM8, UTM9, UTM10, UM11, UTZD35, UTZD38, UTZD39
	Lesson Plans	TRM6, UTM9, ISI18, ISI19, UTM29, UTZD35, UTZD38
	Activities, Texts, Works, Assignments	TZYL21, TZD23, UTZD36, UTZD37, UTZD41
	Forms (personal information, open-ended questions, sentence completion, review, opinion determination, etc.)	UTM34, UTM7, UTM29, TZD25
	Textbooks	UTM30, ISI32, UTZD39
	Rubrics	ISI18, ISI20
	Mind Maps	UTM12, UTM13
	Field Notes	UTZD35, UTZD37
	Poems, Biographies	ISI17
	Drawings	ISI28
	Authentic Assessment Tools	TZD23
	Concept Test	TZD23
	News	UTM9
Check List	ISI20	
	-	TZYL22
Interviews	Semi-Structured	SM1, SM2, UTM13, UTM12, UTM14, TZYL15, TZYL16, TZYL21, TZYL22, TZD23, TZD25, TZYL26, ISI28, UTM31, UTM33, UTZD35, UTZD36, UTZD40, UTZD41
	Unstructured	SM1, UTZD37, UTZD38
	Focus Group	UTM27, UTZD37
	Association Technique	SM1
	In-depth	UTZD35
Observation		ISI19, ISI20, TZYL22, TZYL26, ISI28, UTZD36, UTZD37, UTZD38, UTZD41
	Footage	TZD23, TZD25, UTZD36
	Unstructured	TZD23
	Photos	SM1
	Interviews (Planned-Unplanned)	SM1
Diaries	Researcher	TZD23, TZYL24, TZD25
	Student	TZD23, TZD25
	Teacher	TZYL24
Surveys	Demographic/Interest	UTZD40
	Pre-Test/Post-Test	TZYL24
	Students	TZYL24
	Parent	TZYL24
Attitude Scale	-	TZD25

The findings for the data collection tools of the studies were grouped under six themes: *Document*, *Interviews*, *Observation*, *Diaries*, *Surveys* and *Attitude Scale*. The codes *Curricula*, *Lesson Plans* and *Activities, Texts, Works, Assignments* stand out under the theme *Document*. The codes *Semi-Structured*,

*Unstructured* and *Focus Group* are under the theme *Interviews* while the codes *Footage* and *Unstructured* are under the theme *Observation*.

### **Data Analysis Process of Studies on Primary School Social Studies Education**

This section presents the findings for the third sub-problem. The findings are presented under the headings of data analysis methods (Table 9) and credibility and consistency (Table 10).

**Table 9.** Data Analysis of Studies on Primary School Social Studies Education

Themes	Codes	Studies
Analysis Methods	Content Analysis/Inductive	SM1, SM2, UTM12, UTM7, UTM13, UTM14, ISI18, TZYL21, TZD23, TZYL24, TZYL26, UTM27, UTM29, UTM31, UTM34, UTZD36, UTZD37, UTZD38, UTZD39, UTZD41
	Descriptive Analysis/Deductive	SM1, UM3, TRM6, UM11, TZYL15, TZYL16, TZYL22, TZD25, ISI32, UTM33, UTZD36, UTZD41
	Unspecified	SM4, SM5, UTM8, UTM9, UTM10, ISI17, ISI19, ISI20
	Document Analysis	UTM30, ISI32
	Interpretive/Reflective Analysis	UTZD35
	Macro Analysis	TZD25
	Micro Analysis	TZD25
	Nvivo	UTZD40
	MAXQDA	ISI28

The findings for the data analysis of the studies were coded as *Content Analysis/Inductive*, *Descriptive Analysis/Deductive*, *Unspecified*, *Document Analysis*, *Interpretive/Reflective Analysis*, *Macro Analysis*, *Micro Analysis*, *Nvivo* and *MAXQDA* under the theme *Analysis Methods*.

**Table 10.** Credibility and Consistency of Studies on Primary School Social Studies Education

Themes	Codes	Studies
Objectivity	Detailing the Research Process	SM1, TRM6, UTM7, UTM9, UTM10, UTM12, UTM13, UTM14, TZYL15, TZYL16, ISI18, TZYL21, TZYL22, TZD23, TZYL24, TZD25, TZYL26, UTZD35, UTZD36, UTZD37, UTZD39, UTZD41
	Independent Coding	SM1, SM2, UTM12, TZYL16, ISI18, TZYL21, TZD23, TZYL24, TZD25, UTM27, UTM29, UTM30, UTM31, UTM34, UTZD35, UTZD36, UTZD38
	Data Dump (Writing Down)	SM2, UTM12, UTM13, UTM14, TZYL15, TZYL21, TZYL22, TZD23, TZD25, TZYL26, UTZD39, UTZD40
	Audio/Video Recording	SM2, UTM12, UTM13, UTM14, TZYL15, TZYL21, TZYL22, TZD23, TZD25, UTM27, ISI28
	Researcher Role	UTZD35, UTZD37, UTZD40, UTZD41
	Code Names	TZYL24, TZYL26, ISI28, UTM29, UTZD41
	Use of Software (Nvivo, MAXQDA)	UTM14, TZYL21, TZD25, UTM30

**Table 10.** Continued

Themes	Codes	Studies
Credibility (Accuracy)	Independent Coding	SM1, SM2, UTM12, UTM14, TZYL16, ISI18, TZYL21, TZD23, TZYL24, TZD25, UTM27, UTM29, UTM30, UTM31, UTM34, UTZD35, UTZD36, UTZD38
	Compliance Percentage	UTM12, UTM14, TZYL16, TZYL21, TZD23, TZYL24, UTM27, UTM33
	Data Diversification	UTM9, TZYL21, TZD25, UTZD35, UTZD38, UTZD39, UTZD40
	Review	ISI28, TZYL24, TZYL26, UTM30, UTZD36, UTZD37, UTZD39
	Inter-Rater Concordance	SM2, UTM7, UTM14, TZYL21, UTM33, UTM34
	Control	SM1, UTM9, TZYL21, TZYL24, UTZD37
	Researcher Role	UTZD35, UTZD37, UTZD40, UTZD41
	Description/Direct Quote	UTM30, UTZD40
	Interview Room	TZYL22
	Preliminary Conversation	TZYL22
Reliability	Detailing the Research Process	SM1, TRM6, UTM7, UTM9, UTM10, UTM12, UTM13, UTM14, TZYL15, TZYL16, ISI18, TZYL21, TZYL22, TZD23, TZYL24, TZD25, TZYL26, UTZD35, UTZD36, UTZD37, UTZD39, UTZD41
	Expert Opinion	SM1, SM2, TRM6, UTM9, UTM12, UTM13, UTM14, TZYL16, TZYL21, TZYL22, TZD23, TZD25, TZYL26, UTM27, ISI28, UTM29, UTM30, UTM31
	Compliance Percentage	UTM12, UTM14, TZYL16, TZYL21, TZD23, TZYL24, UTM27, UTM33,
External Validity Process (Generalizability)	Detailing the Research Process	SM1, TRM6, UTM7, UTM9, UTM10, UTM12, UTM13, UTM14, TZYL15, TZYL16, ISI18, TZYL21, TZYL22, TZD23, TZYL24, TZD25, TZYL26, UTZD35, UTZD36, UTZD37, UTZD39, UTZD41
	Researcher's Role	UTZD35, UTZD37, UTZD40, UTZD41
	Pilot Study	TZYL22, UTM27, UTZD40

The findings for the credibility and consistency of the studies were grouped under four themes: *Objectivity*, *Credibility (Accuracy)*, *Reliability* and *External Validity (Generalizability)*. The codes *Detailing the Research Process*, *Independent Coding* and *Data Dump (Writing Down)* stand out under the theme *Objectivity*. The codes *Independent Coding*, *Compliance Percentage* and *Data Diversification* are emphasized under the theme *Credibility (Accuracy)*. The theme *Reliability* underscores the code *Detailing the Research Process*.

#### **Results of Studies on Primary School Social Studies Education**

Table 11 presents the findings regarding the results of the studies.

**Table 11.** Results of Studies on Primary School Social Studies Education

Themes	Codes	Studies
Curriculum Review/Assessment	Frequently modified	UM3, UTM10, SM5
	Shortcomings/differences in practice	UTZD38, UTM10, UTZD40
	Shortcomings/suitability of textbooks	SM4, ISI32, UTM27
	Shortcomings in planning and implementation of local/central curricula	UTZD38, ISI28
	Lack of teachers' knowledge	SM4, UTZD40
	Positive effect of the development of the integrated structure research	SM4, ISI18
	Insufficient time	UTZD38, UTZD40
	Teachers' resource needs and their role in resource selection	UTZD38, UTZD40
	Good Citizenship/Necessity to turn students into ideal citizens	UTZD38, UTZD40
	Emphasis on the concept of Democracy	UTM10, UM11
	American influence	UM3
	Discrepancy between theory and practice	UTZD38
	Shortcomings in content control	UTZD38
	Giving importance to values	UTZD38
	Complex structure	UM3
	Integration of discipline by teachers	UTZD38
	Negative effect of presentation as two separate disciplines	SM5
	The fact that the curriculum was prepared without regard to activity and content needs	UTM27
	Teachers' access to curriculum documents	UTZD38
	Lack of standard forms in lesson plans	UTZD38
	Tendency to teach in an authentically	UTZD38
	Qualification for critical thinking standards	ISI32
	The change in the concept of family according to the conditions of each period	UM11
	Content on literature	UTZD40
	The problem of having been written in a foreign language	UTZD39
	Effect of aid organizations on economic policies	UTZD39
	Impact of foreign countries	UTZD39
	Textbooks with colonization content	UTZD39
	Texts that marginalize ethnic identities while reinforcing African and national identities	UTZD39
	The process of equality in male and female roles	UTZD39
	Inadequacy in terms of creative thinking/need for revision	ISI28
	Focusing only on earthquakes as natural disasters content	UTM12
The concept of natural disaster is not taken into account sufficiently and comprehensively	UTM12	
Values Education	Teaching too much theory	SM1, TZYL15, UTM9
	Shortcomings in the curriculum	UTM27, UTM8, UTM9
	Emphasis on value	TZYL16, TZYL22

**Table 11.** Continued

Themes	Codes	Studies
Values Education	Negative effect of media	UTM27, TZYL15
	(Positive) change in the curriculum	UTM8, UTM9
	Need for applied education	UTM9
	Contribution of social studies course	UTM27
	Being an advisor and role model (method-technique)	UTM27
	Problems encountered in the use of methods/techniques	UTM27
	Negative impact of the national evaluation system (central examinations)	UTM27
	Positive impact of using methods/techniques	TZYL16
	Positive effect of large family	UTM27
	Expectation of discipline from teachers	TZYL22
	Difficulty internalizing the values of responsibility and tolerance	TZYL22
	Positive contributions of NGOs to preservice classroom teachers	UTM33
	Teaching a Lesson/Teaching Studies	Positive impact of using different methods
Positive impact of integrating disciplines		ISI17, TZD23
Global citizenship is mostly addressed in this course		UTM31
Assignments are too superficial given the relationship between global education and global events and issues.		TZYL21
Global events and issues are not addressed in a holistic and global perspective.		TZYL21
Teachers should carry out activities and field trips on important figures besides curriculum content.		TZYL15
Personal experiences enrich the content of this course.		UTZD37
Positive effect of integrating newspapers to the course		TZD25
The research published between 2000 and 2013 analyzes the teaching of this course.		UTM34
NGOs can be benefitted from		UTM33
They need support for professional development.		UTZD35
Although teachers feel independent about what they to teach, they do not feel independent about how to teach.		UTZD35
Teachers feel free when preparing their work schedules.		UTZD35
The fact that teachers feel free has a lot to do with management.	UTZD35	
Concept Teaching, Misconception, Concept Perception	Positive effects of mind mapping method and problems encountered in use	UTM14
	Lack of knowledge of teachers about constructivist approach, methods and techniques	SM2
	Positive feedback on distinguishing the concepts of culture and cultivation	TZYL26
	The concepts of multiculturalism and democracy are emphasized in textbooks.	UTM30
	Textbooks address democracy more than multiculturalism.	UTM30

**Table 11.** Continued

Themes	Codes	Studies
Concept Teaching, Misconception, Concept Perception	Positive effect of methods	TZD23
	Difficulty in explaining the concepts of right and responsibility	UTM13
	Difficulty in making a connection between rights and responsibility	UTM13
	Problems in learning the concepts of culture and national culture	UTM13
	Adoption of Atatürk's principles and reforms as an expression of freedom	UTM13
	Students have misconceptions about natural disasters (landslide, erosion, etc.)	UTM12
Thinking Skills	Globalization and Global Education are the same (Teacher Opinion)	TZYL21
	Insufficiency in developing critical thinking activities	TRM6
	The positive effect of museums on historical thinking	UTZD41
	Positive effect of project development on historical thinking	UTZD41
	According to teachers, creative thinking is important for this course.	ISI28
	Teachers developing positive views of creative thinking practices	ISI28
	The effect of teachers on creativity in this course	ISI28
Content	Research focuses mostly on critical thinking, problem solving and effective use of resources.	UTM34
	Global events are rarely mentioned.	TZYL21
	Environmental issues are addressed in the context of global events.	TZYL21
	Global events and issues are not addressed in a holistic and global perspective.	TZYL21
	World events and issues are limited to natural disasters	TZYL21
	Negative impact of restrictions	UTZD35
	Teachers do not have enough information about what and how to teach (social studies course at their level)	UTZD35
Literature Review	Deficiencies in the objectives and achievements of research that integrates different disciplines	UTZD35
	The number of qualitative researches is quite high.	UTM34
	The number of theses in the field of Life Science is less than that in Social Studies.	UTM34
	Almost the same number of qualitative and quantitative studies are addressed.	UTM34
	Descriptive/screening design is used the most while relational comparative design is used the least.	UTM34
	Data are generally collected using survey method. Observation form is rarely used.	UTM34

**Table 11.** Continued

Themes	Codes	Studies
Literature Review	Constructivist approach and drama method are used the most.	UTM34
	The research design used depends on the subject matter at hand.	UTM34
Citizenship Education	Students have negative views of asylum seekers.	UTM29
	The positive impact of local community studies on student learning and retention	TZD25
	The positive impact of local community studies on integration with everyday life	TZD25
	Students' definitions of citizenship, belonging and community	UTM31
	Lack of information about global citizenship (teachers, students and curriculum)	UTM31
	Teachers' negative views of global citizenship	UTM31
Daily Life	Most preservice classroom teachers are members of the NGO close to their profession.	UTM33
	Combining the world view with social studies education	UTZD36
	Students see the computer and internet as an indispensable part of education.	UTM7
	Students care most about transportation means according to their daily needs.	UTM7
Assessment/Evaluation	Positive contribution of alternative assessment approaches	TZYL24, TZD23
	Negative effect of portfolio use on time and insufficient knowledge of teachers	TZYL24
Heritage Education	Cultural heritage and cultural education are interrelated in tourism.	UTZD36
	The relationship between the state and the citizen is best examined through schools and heritage education there.	UTZD36
Effect of Media	Written and visual media play an important role in prospective teachers' membership in NGOs.	UTM33
	Students learn about global issues and developments mostly through the media.	TZYL21

The findings regarding the results of the were grouped under 12 themes: *Curriculum Review/Assessment, Values Education, Teaching a Lesson/Teaching Studies, Concept Teaching-Misconception-Concept Perception, Thinking Skills, Content, Literature Review, Citizenship Education, Daily Life, Assessment/Evaluation, Heritage education and Effect of Media*. The codes *Frequently Modified, Shortcomings/differences in Practice and Shortcomings/Suitability of Textbooks* are underscored under the theme *Curriculum Review/Assessment*. The codes *Teaching too Much Theory, Shortcomings in the Curriculum and Emphasis on Value* are emphasized under the theme *Values Education*. The codes *Positive Impact of Using Different Methods and Positive Impact of Integrating Disciplines* are highlighted under the theme *Teaching a Lesson/Teaching Studies*.

#### ***Findings Related to Recommendations on Results of Studies on Primary School Social Studies Education***

Table 12 shows the findings related to the recommendations on the results of the studies on primary school social studies education.

**Table 12.** Recommendations on Results of Studies on Primary School Social Studies Education

Theme	Code	Studies
Value Education	Schools and families should collaborate.	UTM9, TZYL16, TZYL15, TZYL22
	Parents should be involved in the process.	UTM9, TZYL15, TZYL16, TZYL22
	Parents should be provided with value education.	TZYL22, UTM27
	Activities on value acquisition should be held in schools.	TZYL22, TZYL26
	Teachers should be provided with in-service training and seminars.	TZYL16, UTM27
	Ministry of Education should provide material support, and content should be enriched.	TZYL16, TZYL22
	Teacher behavior should be exemplary.	TZYL15, TZYL22
	Teachers should be encouraged to participate more in critical self-reflections in terms of professional practice.	SM1
	There should be a focus that allows teachers to reflect on their personal epistemology (to promote social transformation teaching practices).	SM1
	Longer term studies should be conducted to examine the relationship between teaching practices and teachers' epistemology.	SM1
	Beliefs and practices should be taken into account during professional development experiences.	SM1
	The focus should not only be on teaching strategies. This may not be sufficient to promote the values of education that allows teachers to critically put their ethical perspectives on the social justice agenda into practice.	SM1
	Students and their parents should be provided with peace education.	UTM8
	Cooperation (nongovernmental organizations) should be established with NGOs.	TZYL15
	Activities integrated with daily life should be held.	TZYL15
	Rewards should be used (NGOs, institutions, etc.).	TZYL16
The content should consist of national heroes and national cultural elements.	TZYL16	
It should be implemented from pre-school period on.	TZYL22	
Research Method /Research Subject	Qualitative research should be conducted.	TRM6, TZYL26, UTM27, UTM34
	Qualitative or quantitative research should be conducted.	TZD25, UTM27, ISI33
	Research should focus on different socioeconomic groups.	TZD23, UTZD35
	Research on the function of global education should be carried out using different qualitative and quantitative methods.	TZYL21,
	The focus should be on each element in the literature of global education.	TZYL21
	Applied research should be performed on value education.	TZYL22
	Research should involve teachers from different disciplines.	TZD23
	Longitudinal studies should be conducted.	ISI28
Research should be conducted on portfolio assessment.	TZYL24	



**Table 12.** Continued

<b>Theme</b>	<b>Code</b>	<b>Studies</b>	
Research Method /Research Subject	Research should be conducted on value education.	UTM34	
	Elementary school students' reactions to and relationships with texts should be investigated to help them develop perspectives on social studies.	UTZD40	
	Children's literature should be included.	UTZD40	
Lecturing/Approach- Method-Technique	Different disciplines should cooperate/ Disciplines should be interrelated.	SM2, UTM9, UTM12, UTM14, ISI19, TZYL22, TZD23, UTM30	
	Methods and techniques that make students active should be used.	TRM6	
	Teachers should be provided with vocational training (in-service, seminars, etc.).	SM2	
	In-class and out-of-class activities should be performed.	UTM8	
	Visual teaching methods and techniques should be used to teach abstract concepts.	UTM13	
	Methods and techniques should be applied based on different variables.	UTM14	
	Literacy skills should be addressed.	ISI18	
	There should be activities to help students develop the skills needed to respect and empathize with different characteristics and ideas.	TZYL21	
	The number of activities providing information on different cultural elements should be increased, and activities should not be superficial.	TZYL21	
	Tools and materials should be appropriate to the constructivist approach.	TZYL26	
	Transparency is key.	UTZD37	
	Teaching and Application	Supervisors, teachers, clergymen and board of directors should negotiate.	SM5, UTM29
		Parent engagement should be encouraged.	TZD25, UTM29
Schools should focus on practices such as school councils and student presidential elections (teaching rights).		UTM13	
Budget should be allocated.		TZYL15	
The language-art block should include democracy education.		ISI17	
The diversity of informative and nonfiction texts should be increased.		ISI18	
Exploration and experimentation should be encouraged.		ISI19	
Activities based on concepts and interdisciplinary approaches should be performed.		TZD23	
Field experts should be consulted.		TZD25	
Teachers should share.		TZD25	
Institutions and organizations should be cooperated with.		TZD25	
Activities should be carried out to help students to learn about different cultures.	TZYL26		
Creativity-enhancing activities should be carried out.	ISI28		

**Table 12.** Continued

<b>Theme</b>	<b>Code</b>	<b>Studies</b>
Teaching and Application	Contents of economic activities in democratic societies should be integrated into activities.	UTM30
	Global citizenship education should involve interdisciplinarity.	UTM31
	Teachers should prepare before museum practices.	UTZD41
New Curriculum Development / Curriculum Revision	Value education outcomes should be highlighted.	TZYL15, UTM27
	National and local levels should cooperate.	SM5
	Peace education should be highlighted.	UTM8
	The principles of curriculum development should be taken into consideration, and detailed studies should be conducted on value education.	UTM9
	Curriculum should be progressive and student-centered and flexible to meet immediate needs.	UTM10
	Curriculum development should involve standards (CCSS, ELA, etc.).	ISI18
	Studies on local communities should be conducted.	TZD25
	Parents should be informed.	TZYL26
	Research should be conducted to develop social studies curricula in the future.	UTZD35
	Curriculum autonomy should be guaranteed.	UTZD35
Research on restructuring should be conducted.	UTZD38	
Sufficient time should be provided.	UTZD38	
State and local governments should finance it.	UTZD38	
It should be holistic.	UTZD38	
Teacher Training/ Preservice Teacher Training	Education faculties should offer applied education.	UTM8
	Strategies should be based on research.	ISI18
	Preservice teachers should have access to primary resources.	ISI18
	Preservice teachers should know how to find effective tools that are independent of state policies.	ISI18
	Preservice teachers should be provided with the methods and techniques of art lessons.	ISI19
	Teachers should be offered in-service training on local community studies.	TZD25
	Education faculties should offer lectures on local community work.	TZD25
	Global citizenship education should be included in the curriculum.	UTM31
	There should be collaboration between schools and NGOs for the course of Community Service Practices.	UTM33
	Teacher training should include micro-teaching and video-recorded practices.	UTZD37
Observational studies should be performed (in teacher training).	UTZD37	
Courses that integrate topics should be developed.	UTZD37	
There should be collaboration with teachers from different fields.	UTZD37	

**Table 12.** Continued

<b>Theme</b>	<b>Code</b>	<b>Studies</b>
Teacher Training/ Preservice Teacher Training	Teachers and preservice teachers should cooperate.	UTZD37
	Teachers should participate in STEM and museum activities during social studies education.	UTZD41
Curriculum Content	Learning activities should be restored.	SM4
	It should address cultural human activities about their universal needs and aspirations.	SM4
	Social research should focus on strong ideas that are based on authentic activities.	SM4
	Sufficient time should be allocated.	SM4
	History should focus on two objectives: providing appropriate education and reinforcing nationalist sentiment.	SM5
	Peace education-oriented	UTM8
	Human rights and democracy should be the focal points of attention.	UTM10
	Some activities should address regional disasters.	UTM12
	Content development activities by MoNE should include value education activities.	TZYL15
	Social studies should be a must course.	UTZD40
	Literacy development process should include content integration.	UTZD40
Textbooks	Textbooks should include more up-to-date examples of value education.	TZYL22, UTM27
	Pedagogues should be consulted for the selection of images.	UTM12
	Interdisciplinary activities should be carried out.	TZD23
	More images should be used.	TZYL26
	Textbooks should be organized to help students develop critical thinking skills.	ISI32
	We should be careful about publishers.	ISI32
	There should be cooperation with experts.	ISI32
	Textbooks should not be the main teaching resource.	UTZD35
Research should be carried out on the interaction between students and teachers.	UTZD39	
Assessment and Evaluation	It should help develop thinking skills.	SM2
	There should be a focus on portfolio evaluation (especially e-portfolio).	TZYL24
	Teachers should be informed about alternative assessment and evaluation approaches.	TZYL24
	MoNE and schools should cooperate for e-portfolio and portfolio evaluation.	TZYL24
Relation to Daily Life and Environment	Parents should be informed about portfolio evaluation.	TZYL24
	Social studies should play a more prominent role in primary schools.	ISI17
	Students' levels should be considered when informing them about good and bad events in the world.	TZYL21
	Activities should help students develop a global perspective and make them feel individual, social and national connections	TZYL21

**Table 12.** Continued

Theme	Code	Studies
Relation to Daily Life and Environment	Value education should be related to life.	TZYL22
	Education should teach local elements.	UTZD35
Project studies	Preservice teachers should be provided the opportunity to put their knowledge into practice.	ISI20
	They should be value education-oriented.	TZYL15
	Results should be shared with teachers, preservice teachers and boards.	ISI20
	Students should be encouraged to take on project- and performance-related tasks.	TZYL21
	Education on asylum seekers should be provided.	UTM29
Concept Teaching, Misconception, Concept Perception	The concept of Disaster, Erosion, Landslide	UTM12
	Democracy	ISI17
	Global education	TZYL21
	Division of labor, region, multiculturalism	UTM30
Thinking Skills	Research-based practices should be developed for historical thinking skills.	ISI18
	They should be integrated with literacy.	ISI18
	Evidence-based teaching practices should be performed for historical thinking skills.	ISI18
No Recommendations-		UM3, UTM7, UM11
Heritage Education	An in-depth anthropological analysis should be used.	UTZD36
	Further research should be conducted on tourism and tourism education to explore issues related to national ideologies and their negotiation by teachers and young people.	UTZD36
Media	Parents should be taught how to use technological tools for value education.	TZYL16
	Media should include programs that contribute to the cultural development of children.	TZYL26

The findings related to the recommendations on the results of the studies on primary school social studies education were grouped under the themes of *Value Education, Research Method /Research Subject, Lecturing/Approach-Method-Technique, Teaching and Application, New Curriculum Development/Curriculum Revision, Teacher Training/ Preservice Teacher Training, Curriculum Content, Textbooks, Assessment and Evaluation, Relation to Daily Life and Environment, Project studies, Concept Teaching, Misconception, Concept Perception, Thinking Skills, No Recommendations, Heritage Education and Media*. Under the theme of “*Value Education*,” it is recommended that parents be involved, and that schools and families cooperate in value education. The theme of “*Research Method /Research Subject*,” states that qualitative and quantitative methods should be used in research on social studies education focusing on different socioeconomic groups. According to the theme of “*Lecturing/Approach-Method-Technique*,” different disciplines should cooperate for social studies course, different methods and techniques should be used to make students active, teachers should be provided with vocational training (in-service, seminars, etc.) and activities should focus on literacy skills.

## Discussion and Conclusion

This study evaluated the current status of research on primary school social studies education and reached the following results.

The first sub-problem of this review addressed the subject areas of studies on primary school social studies education. The result shows that studies focus mostly on curriculum evaluation, subject/unit analysis and values education. Curriculum evaluation studies mostly analyze the social studies curricula of first to fifth grade while they tackle the subjects of critical thinking standards, family, democracy, children's literature ve social studies in basic education very little. Therefore, primary school social studies research focuses mostly on curriculum evaluation but fails to provide insight into how curricula are put into practice. Subject/unit-based studies address local community, migration, global education and global citizenship and benefiting from NGOs. Studies on values education focus on teachers' views, value of responsibility, historical heritage, family, peace and active citizenship. Therefore, both subject/unit-based studies and values education studies deal with the concept of citizenship. On the other hand, there are few studies using new methods and techniques to find new ways to put primary school social studies into practice. Similarly, there is a limited number of studies on concept teaching and misconceptions. This might be due to failure to go beyond curriculum evaluation in primary school social studies education and the value crisis as a result of recent civil wars, migration and terrorist acts. There are studies supporting this result (Brophy & Alleman, 2009; Kartal, Öksüz, Baba Öztürk, & Güven Demir, 2018). Some studies conclude that curriculum evaluation contributes to education (Atik, 2006; Sivesind & Westbury, 2016). In recent years, the concept of "teacher agency" has attracted attention in the development of educational policies (Gülmez, 2019; Priestley, Biesta, & Robinson, 2015), which is one of the consequences. On the other hand, international studies focus mostly on globalization, global education, cultural education and heritage and migration. Both national and international studies emphasize value education, which is due to the fact that social studies education is approached from a one-dimensional (citizenship transmission) perspective and that there are very few reflective studies that associate it with different disciplines (especially with positive sciences).

The second sub-problem addressed the research designs of studies on primary school social studies education. The results show that studies mostly use action research, case study or phenomenology method. There are few studies using grounded theory and ethnographic design. This might be due to the fact that grounded theory and ethnographic studies take longer to conduct. However, the majority of qualitative studies in this area do not specify any qualitative research design (Alarcon et al., 2015; Aybek & Aslan, 2016; Brophy & Alleman, 2009; Brownlee et al., 2016; Çatak, 2015; Demir, Şahin, & Tutkun, 2016; Evertsson, 2015; Johnson et al., 2015; Kartal & Turan, 2015; Kurtdede Fidan, 2013; Ranshaw Sell & Griffin, 2017; Şeyihoğlu & Kartal, 2010, 2013; Taneri & Tangülü, 2017; Turan & Kartal, 2012). This might be due to lack of information on qualitative research designs. Yıldırım (1999) argues that researchers consider qualitative research to be a general concept as it is associated with ethnography, anthropology, case study, interpretive research, action research, natural research, descriptive research, grounded theory and content analysis. Studies on primary school social studies education mostly focus on individuals, and therefore, the number of studies conducting document review is very limited. Studies focusing on individuals are mostly about classroom teachers, yet, very few of these studies are qualitative. This is due to the fact that these studies are more interested in views than actual application and observation, which is confirmed by some research (Bal İncebacak & Tangülü, 2015; Brownlee et al., 2016; Kartal et al., 2018; Şeyihoğlu & Kartal, 2013).

The third sub-problem addressed the data analysis process of studies on primary school social studies education. The results show that studies mostly use content analysis and descriptive analysis. However, most of the studies in question do not specify any analysis method (Alarcon et al., 2015; Brophy & Alleman, 2009; Coşkun Keskin & Keskin, 2009; Coşkun Keskin, 2012; Evertsson, 2015; Johnson et al., 2015; Koçoğlu, 2012; Ranshaw Sell & Griffin, 2017). Also mentioned analytical techniques (Nvivo, such as MAXQDA) are actually a qualitative analysis program. The reason behind this is that researchers have limited knowledge of analysis methods. The studies pay attention to detailing the research process to ensure objectivity, reliability and external validity. However, very few studies perform independent coding for objectivity, use a software package for analysis, make the researcher's role explicit and develop codes and themes. The studies, which was analyzed for credibility, mostly use independent coding, compliance percentage and data diversification. However, very few of them conduct reviews, assess their inter-rater concordance, state the researcher's role, use direct quotes and conduct preliminary conversations. Most studies in question detail the research process, take expert opinions and calculate compliance percentages for reliability and validity while they rarely make the researcher's role explicit and conduct pilot tests. This is due to the nature of qualitative research on social studies. Social studies is based on social sciences. This represents similar philosophical views with qualitative research. Qualitative research focuses on description and representation rather than quantification and aims to provide insight into people's world views. Therefore, qualitative studies on social studies detail the research process, consult experts, lay more emphasis on convergence than on congruence percentages, support results with direct quotes and conduct pilot studies to ensure credibility and consistency.

The fourth sub-problem addressed the findings of studies on primary school social studies education. The studies often reported problems caused by changes made to curricula (Çatak, 2015; Evertsson, 2015; Koçoğlu, 2012), discrepancy between curricula and their implementation (Babini, 2013; Harrington, 2012; Koçoğlu, 2012) and mismatch between curricula and textbook content. The results also show that teachers do not have knowledge of the curriculum for the grade they teach as they are not an integral part of curriculum development process. This is also due to the fact that instead of developing and teaching national curricula, foreign curricula are introduced into the educational system without scrutinizing them for their appropriateness to national needs.

The fifth sub-problem of the study examined the recommendations on the results of the studies on primary school social studies education. Those studies recommend that parents be involved, and that schools and families cooperate in the process (Coşkun Keskin, 2012; Taymur, 2015; Gülmüş, 2015; Coşkun, 2011). According to those studies, value education activities should relate to life and start before school, families and schools should be provided with peace education (Coşkun Keskin & Keskin, 2009; Taymur, 2015; Coşkun, 2011), studies on social studies education should use qualitative methods, and qualitative and quantitative studies should be carried out (Akaydın & Kaya, 2015; Coşkun Keskin & Keskin, 2009; Demir et al., 2016; Selanik Ay, 2010, 2016). There are no recommendations for mixed methods. Children's literature should be included in social studies research, and teachers from different disciplines should collaborate to study social studies topics. Studies have also made similar recommendations regarding lecturing; social studies course should be associated with different disciplines (Bolat, 2016; Harrington, 2012), different methods and techniques should be used to make students active, and the focus should be on helping students develop literacy skills (Akar & Yalçın, 2017; Bolat, 2016; Coşkun, 2011; Coşkun Keskin, 2012; Gleeson & D'Souza, 2016; Johnson et al., 2015; Şeyihoğlu & Kartal, 2010, 2013; Turan & Kartal, 2012). Regarding the revision of the social studies curriculum,

studies recommend that value education be emphasized and that the curriculum be holistic and autonomous. In terms of teacher training, studies suggest that education faculties offer applied and research-based education, that teachers and preservice teachers cooperate, and that there be cooperation with teachers from different branches. In the theme of measurement and evaluation, studies recommend e-Portfolio usage and integration of thinking skills with literacy. On the other hand, some studies do not make recommendations. Although studies state that different disciplines should cooperate for primary school social studies education, they focus mostly on studies on value education, which might be due to the fact that social studies education, by its very nature, focuses on turning students into ideal citizens and teaching them to adapt to social conditions of the country in which they live. We can, therefore, claim that social studies research is caught in a vicious circle and focuses on only one dimension. However, the recommendations (collaboration among disciplines to conduct studies on thinking skills and literacy in social studies education) of the studies can help students learn not only how to adhere to social norms but also how to be a member of the international community.

The results show that the studies on values education in the primary school social studies education are mostly theoretical (Brownlee et al., 2016; Coşkun Keskin, 2012; Taymur, 2015) and that curricula have shortcomings in terms of values education (Coşkun Keskin & Keskin, 2009; Kurtdele Fidan, 2013). This is due to the fact that values education research focuses more on theory than on practice and that values education practices in curricula are alien to the social and cultural fabric. The results of the studies also show that using different methods and techniques has a positive effect on primary school social studies course in general and on the integration of disciplines in particular. The SONAM (social sciences- natural sciences-mathematics) activities developed to integrate positive sciences and social sciences in the social studies course support this result (Kartal & Çağlayan, 2018).

### Suggestions

The following are recommendations based on the results:

- The studies on primary school social studies education mostly evaluate curricula in general but do not look into how they are put into practice. It is, therefore, recommended that further research be conducted on the practical aspect of primary school social studies curricula. These studies should select appropriate methods and techniques and focus on concept teaching and misconceptions in primary school social studies education. Values education should be integrated with literary works that contain cultural elements and society values.
- It is recommended that future studies use grounded theory and ethnography more. Longitudinal cultural studies should be conducted in addition to short-term and idea-based document review studies. These studies should also include not only teachers but also preservice teachers and students. Workshops on qualitative research methods and techniques in social studies should be organized. Students at all levels should be provided with practical training on qualitative research methodologies. Comparative qualitative studies should be conducted through international projects and exchange programs.
- The studies mostly employ content analysis and descriptive analysis methods. Therefore, more qualitative studies should be conducted, and future researchers should be trained on software packages for analysis (Nvivo, MAXQDA). In addition, future studies should describe in detail their research processes and focus on inter-rater concordance and data diversification instead of compliance percentage.

- National curricula should be developed based on Education 4.0 in close connection with sociocultural factors. Social studies curricula should include creative and critical thinking skills, integrate different disciplines and focus on activities to put various methods and techniques into practice. Field studies involving all stakeholders and cultural values should be conducted. Migration paradigms for citizenship education should be taken into account and primary school social studies education should be reformed.
- It is recommended that the results and suggestions of the studies carried out on the Social Studies course in primary school should be constituted in connection with each other. In addition, it is also suggested that the "Social Studies Teaching" course should be applied in faculty of education with cooperation between education faculties and primary schools. These practices should be designed to enable real-world connection and collaboration with different disciplines.
- This review is limited to Turkish and English sources. It is recommended that future research include databases in different languages. Mixed method studies using qualitative and quantitative research methods were not included in this review. Therefore, a further study on mixed method studies in this area should be conducted.



## References

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### Appendix 1. List of Studies

Study	Code
Brownlee, J. L., Scholes, L., Walker, S., & Johansson, E. (2016)	SM1
Şeyihoğlu, A., & Kartal, A. (2010)	SM2
Çatak, M. (2015)	UM3
Brophy, J., & Alleman, J. (2009)	SM4
Evertsson, J. (2015)	SM5
Demir, M. K., Şahin, Ç., & Tutkun, T. (2016)	TRM6
Bal İncebacak, B., & Tangülü, Z. (2015)	UTM7
Coşkun Keskin, S., & Keskin, Y. (2009)	UTM8
Coşkun Keskin, S. (2012)	UTM9
Koçoğlu, E. (2012)	UTM10
Ünal, F., & Özmen, C. (2012)	UM11
Turan, İ., & Kartal, A. (2012)	UTM12
Kartal, A., & Turan, İ. (2015)	UTM13
Şeyihoğlu, A., & Kartal, A. (2013)	UTM14
Taymur, Z. A. (2015)	TZYL15
Gülmüş, R. (2015)	TZYL16
Ranshaw Sell, C., & Griffin, K. (2017)	ISI17
Gleeson, A. M., & D'Souza, L. A. (2016)	ISI18
Johnson, E. J., Liu, K., & Goble, K. (2015)	ISI19
Alarcon, J., Holmes, K., & Bybee, E. (2015)	ISI20
Bozkurt, M. (2013)	TZYL21
Coşkun, D. (2011)	TZYL22
Bolat, Y. (2016)	TZD23
Özbek Çelik, G. (2014)	TZYL24
Selanik Ay, T. (2010)	TZD25
Küçük, H. (2009)	TZYL26
Kurtdede Fidan, N. (2013)	UTM27
Ucus, S. (2018)	ISI28
Taneri, A., & Tangülü, Z. (2017)	UTM29
Akar, C., & Yalçın, D. (2017)	UTM30
Balbağ, N. L., & Türkcan, B. (2017)	UTM31
Aybek, B., & Aslan, S. (2016)	ISI32
Selanik Ay, T. (2016)	UTM33
Akaydın, B. B., & Kaya, S. (2015)	UTM34
Johnson, J. A. (2016)	UTZD35
McGill, A. B. E. (2012)	UTZD36
Basye, C. (2012)	UTZD37
Babini, K. C. (2013)	UTZD38
Omole, C. (2016)	UTZD39
Harrington, J. M. (2012)	UTZD40
Lund, A. K. (2012)	UTZD41