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Turkish pre-service social studies teachers' perceptions of "Good" citizenship

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The current study explores Turkish pre-service social studies teachers' perceptions of "good" citizenship. The participants were 580 pre-service social studies teachers from 6 different universities in Turkey. The data were collected through an interview form having one open-ended question and analyzed according to open coding procedure. The results of the study show that Turkish pre-service social studies teachers' perceptions of "good" citizenship are personally responsible, in other words, accordant with the traditional citizen type. Accordingly, pre-service social studies teachers mostly perceive good citizens as people who are honest, decent, loyal to the government and patriotic.

Key words: Social studies, good citizen, citizenship education, pre-service teachers.

INTRODUCTION

Training citizens or in other words citizenship education has been an important issue for the countries from past to present (Evans, 2006; Bellamy, 2008; Sabancı, 2008; Doğanay, 2009; Doğanay and Sarı, 2009; Rapoport, 2010; Acun et al., 2010; Quaynor, 2011; Uğurlu, 2013). While "citizen" expresses legal membership of an individual to the government or the society (Üstel, 1999; Cogan and Derricott, 2000; Doğanay, 2003; Kadioğlu, 2006), "citizenship" includes characteristics of becoming a citizen formed from a number of rights and responsibilities (Üstel, 1999; Scott and Lawson, 2002; Cogan and Derricott, 2000; Doğanay, 2003; Faulks, 2006; Kadioğlu, 2006; Bellamy, 2008). Citizenship is both "a dynamic concept as rights and responsibilities change over time as a result of social struggle, economic change and shifts in governing ideology" (Faulks, 2006, p. 123) and "a contested concept" (Faulks, 2006, p. 123; Kerr,

2003, p. 2). Consequently, citizenship has gone through many phases till arriving at today's definitions and undergone many changes (Kılınç and Dere, 2013). In today's definitions about citizenship education, it is seen that training citizens who are aware of their individual rights and responsibilities; have a certain number of universal knowledge, abilities and democratic values; arrive at agreements in the society and consider the benefits to the society; and actively participate in social and political works are emphasized (Cogan and Derricott, 2000; Kerr, 2003; Westheimer and Kahne, 2004; Evans, 2006; Kadioğlu, 2008; Acun et al., 2010). Accordingly, "the subject of citizenship education is the characteristics of a good citizen and how to gain these characteristics" (Bakioğlu and Kurt, 2009). The general purpose of education systems is to train citizens in order to continue governments' existence (Bellamy, 2008; Safran, 2008;

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Kadioğlu, 2008; Üstel, 2011). Therefore, “the ways in which citizenship are defined ideologically by the government of the day will of course affect the form and effectiveness of citizenship education in schools” (Faulks, 2006, p. 124). Sabancı (2008) states that this situation is expressed with “good, effective and productive citizen terms in education and teaching programs” (p. 29). While citizenship education is provided as a separate course in the school curriculum in some countries, it is provided through other courses such as history, geography, religious education, social studies, and moral education in some other countries (Quaynor, 2011; Saint-Martin, 2013). The definition of a good citizen changes according to the societies, governments and administrative systems. As a result of this, citizenship education differs from country to country and time (Bakioğlu and Kurt, 2009; Öner and Kamçı, 2013).

Citizenship education in Turkey

In early Turkish societies living styles were affecting their education system, such as in Huns, nomadism determined their training citizen models. Huns cared about soldiery, governorship, vocational education, religious education and child rearing in their education system. Accordingly, in Huns, a good citizen should be a skillful soldier, a good organizer, have passion of independent living and have a vocational craft. These are the same for the Kök Turks as well. Apart from the Huns, Kök Turks were writing. Therefore, it is possible that they had a planned education. Different from Huns and Kök Turks, the Uighur Turks were settled. They used writing and had their own alphabet. Literacy and community’s knowledge level increased. A good citizen should be well educated. As a result of this an educated person could have a good position in government (Akyüz, 2011). However, planned citizenship education in Turkish education system started at the period of Ottoman Empire in the 1840s in parallel with the developments of the West (Üstel, 2011; MEB, 2010). In the late period of Ottoman Empire “citizenship education was highlighted in order to strengthen the ties that hold government and the citizens together”. In Turkish Republic period founded after Ottoman Empire, “training individuals who care for their country, and know about their citizenship responsibilities is one of the general purposes of Turkish national education” (MEB, 2010, p. 4). Citizenship education in Turkey is provided through different courses within historical process. Citizenship education is currently given under the scope of life sciences (1st to 3rd grades) and social studies (4th grade) at primary school, social studies at secondary school (5th, 6th and 7th grades) and “Citizenship and Democracy Education” at 8th grade. However, the controversy about abolishing this course from the curriculum and integrating it into other courses’ context (e.g. social studies) as it was in the past (Bakioğlu and Kurt, 2009)

still continues.

In nation-state Turkey, educational planning is performed by the government. Accordingly, all the courses given at schools are supposed to be in accordance with Turkish National Education Basic Law No 1739. In this law, while specifying the general purposes of national education, it is also defined which characteristics a citizen needs to attain. According to this law a good citizen should be;

1. “committed to Atatürk’s reforms and principles, his concept of nationalism as defined in the Constitution; who adopt, protect and improve the national, moral, human, spiritual and cultural values of the Turkish nation; who love and always elevate their families, homeland and nation; who are aware of their duties and responsibilities towards the Turkish Republic- which is a democratic, secular and social state ruled by law based on human rights and the basic principles defined in the beginning of the Constitution- and behave accordingly;
2. physically, mentally, morally, spiritually and emotionally have a moderate and healthy personality and mentality, independent and scientific thinking power, a wide world view; who respect human rights, appreciate enterprise and individuality; who feel responsibility towards the society; and who are constructive, creative and productive;
3. equipped with the necessary knowledge, skills, attitude and habit of working cooperatively in line with their own interests, talents and abilities” (OECD, 2005).

Safran (2008) states that effective citizenship education is emphasized in the general purposes of national education and the objectives of the social studies course coincide with these features. In this case, it is possible to say that training good/effective citizens in our country is mostly assigned to the courses of life sciences and social studies and 8th grade citizenship and democracy education. When the literature is reviewed about the definitions of social studies, (MEB, 2005; Doğanay, 2003; Öztürk, 2006; NCSS, 1994; Ross, 2010; Barr et al., 1978), it is clear that educating citizens is emphasized. According to Doğanay (2003), although the general purpose of the education system in a country is educating effective citizens, this task needs to be fulfilled by mainly social studies courses in the school programs. Doğanay (2003) states that the main purpose of the social studies course in a democratic country is raising effective citizens who can improve democratic process. Sağlam (2012) expresses that primary school is a crucial step in creating citizenship awareness; and this situation raises the importance of effective citizenship competences of teachers working at primary schools because the students at that stage tend to take their teachers as modal.

The courses of social studies at secondary school and citizenship and democracy education are given by social studies teachers. In this sense, it is important to reveal

pre-service social studies teachers' perceptions of "good" citizenship as Martin (2008) also stated "they will be social studies teachers influencing the next generation of students with their values of judgment" (p. 54–55). Similarly, Doğanay (2009) argues for the importance of exploring "how the pre-service teachers who will undertake the task of educating active citizens especially for the development of the democracy perceive themselves in terms of citizenship perception and whether their actions coincide with their perceptions" (p. 32). Doğanay (2009) indicates that citizenship understanding in Turkey is mostly discussed theoretically; yet, more empirical evidences are needed about citizenship perception and behaviors. In this regard, the current study especially becomes more of an issue as it reveals Turkish pre-service social studies teachers' perceptions of good citizenship. Besides, this study plays a crucial role in providing data to the field about the social studies teachers' perceptions of good citizenship.

Research on citizenship perception

Doğanay (2009) states that the studies on citizenship concept or perception mostly focus on the concept of good citizen and there are many research studies on the good citizen perceptions adults, teachers and adolescents. Westheimer and Kahne (2004) mention three types of citizenship model: "personally responsible", "participatory" and "justice-oriented" and in their study, which was conducted with high school students and their citizenship education teachers, they presented that students of an effective curriculum adopt "participatory citizen" and "justice-oriented citizen" models. They state that "personally responsible" citizenship model is a traditional citizenship model and all the educational institutions aim at training that kind of citizens. However, they claim that "participatory" and "justice-centered" citizenship models need to be improved for an effective democracy. Kılınç and Dere (2013) revealed that high school students found social anxiety-oriented characteristics more important than other essential characteristics of good citizenship; knowledge-oriented characteristics are ranked as second and conservatism-oriented characteristics are ranked as the last in their survey study. They propounded that high school students emphasized the essential characteristics of a good citizen as caring for your country, having moral behaviors and being respectful to the social values. Doğanay and Sarı (2009) reported in their study with 238 high school students that while 209 of these students had traditional citizenship perceptions, 24 of them had social-active citizenship perceptions. They stated that female students had more traditional citizenship perceptions than males and students whose families were in medium-high income group mostly had social-active citizenship perceptions.

When the related literature is reviewed, it is clear that

there are a few studies on the good citizenship perceptions of pre-service social studies teachers. Martin (2008) stated in her study with pre-service primary and secondary teachers that these prospective teachers emphasized civic engagement more than political engagement and they viewed "good citizen" as someone who helps others and follows laws. Doğanay (2009) concluded, in his quantitative study with 489 pre-service teachers attending different programs, that pre-service teachers mostly adopt the concept of traditional citizenship. Moreover, the study revealed that pre-service teachers adopting social-active citizenship perception take a more active and participating role than those adopting traditional citizenship perceptions in many dimensions of active citizenship. Bakioğlu and Kurt (2009) presented, in their study with 45 teachers working at different educational levels and branches, that most of the teachers mentioned an obedient type of citizen who follows the rules while defining the citizenship as a requirement of democracy. They stated that while nearly half of the teachers in the sampling claimed they educated obedient, hesitant citizens who never interrogate, the others claimed they educated citizens suitable for the purposes of national education. With the aim of revealing "good citizenship" perceptions of primary school teachers, O'Brien and Smith (2011) set forth in their study based on the framework of Westheimer and Kahne (2004) that pre-service teachers adopt "personally responsible" citizen model. As the researches (Kılınç and Dere, 2013; O'Brien and Smith, 2011; Doğanay and Sarı, 2009; Doğanay, 2009; Martin, 2008; Westheimer and Kahne, 2004) show that both students, teacher candidates and teachers usually perceive citizenship as "personally responsible" but in order to flourish the democracy people should have "participatory" and "justice oriented" perception of citizenship (O'Brien and Smith, 2011). Because social studies teachers have crucial role in educating citizen for democratic society, pre-service social studies teachers' perceptions of good citizenship are important. They will be effective young generations with their perceptions of good citizenship.

Research question

The present study aims to reveal pre-service social studies teachers' perceptions of good citizenship. Therefore, the research question of the current study is "How do pre-service social studies teachers perceive good citizenship?"

METHOD

The method that the author used in the current study was derived primarily from research into pre-service teachers' perceptions of "good" citizenship in the tradition of O'Brien and Smith (2011). The author used the quantitative data-collection techniques to obtain data. Because the author wanted to reach as many pre-service

social studies teachers as possible he used the survey method. Survey method is a research approach aiming to describe the situation in the past or present as it exists at the moment (Karasar, 2007).

Participants

In order to identify the participants, convenience sampling is applied. Convenience sampling is often favored by the researchers as it is easy to reach the participants and these participants are willing to take part in the study (Teddlie and Yu, 2007). As a result, the participants were chosen among the senior students attending social studies teaching programs from six different universities. These universities are located in different geographical regions of Turkey. Each university did not represent the different geographical region. In this way, the study is carried out with 580 participants.

Data collection techniques

Data collected by a single open-ended question. Participants were asked to answer the question "What is a good citizen?" in written form. The data were collected by the authorized faculty members of the social studies departments in the sample universities and sent to the researcher via mail.

Data analysis

Open coding procedure was applied for the analysis of data. In open coding procedure, the researcher presents specific categories according to the data obtained through data collection instrument (Creswell, 2007; Kemper et al., 2003). As a result of the analysis, 14 categories were revealed. As some students gave multiple answers to some questions, there is difference between the number of the students ($n=580$) and frequencies in the categories ($f=1532$). In order to verify the reliability of the study, reliability formula developed by Miles and Huberman (1994) was used. According to this, the "consensus" and "dissensus" items were specified by comparing the categories by the researcher and an expert on the field. As $P=92\%$ is calculated, the coding is accepted as reliable.

RESULTS

The analysis of pre-service social studies teachers' perceptions of good citizenship is summarized in Table 1.

When Table 1 is examined, 216 (37.24%) of pre-service social studies teachers expressed that good citizenship is having honesty and ethics. Almost 1/3 of the participants stated that a good citizen is supposed to be honest at work, school, in life and relationships. Honesty is the most expressed category. We can interpret that participants think that honesty is the most important feature of a good citizen. Second category, which was expressed by 184 (31.72%) participants, is loyalty to the government, patriotism and pride about Turkey. Participants highlighted that a good citizen is supposed to be proud of his/her country and loyal to the government and nation. A good citizen needs to prioritize the profits of the government and nation and not to do actions and behaviors which will destroy the unity and integrity of the

Table 1. Pre-service social studies teachers' perceptions of good citizenship.

| Categories | F |
|---|-----|
| Ethics / Honesty | 216 |
| Loyalty /Pride about Turkey/Patriotism | 184 |
| Respecting others | 146 |
| Keeping up with current issues | 130 |
| Knowing and applying rights and responsibilities | 122 |
| Following laws | 115 |
| Citizenship Responsibilities (Paying taxes, voting, military service) | 110 |
| Achievement Orientation / Be Educated | 106 |
| Having critical perspective | 97 |
| Environmental Responsibility | 94 |
| Respecting and loving family | 84 |
| Community Involvement (help others, attend community events) | 46 |
| Loyalty to Ataturk's Principles and revolutions | 44 |
| Having religious values | 38 |

government in schismatic actions. It is expressed that a good citizen is someone who doesn't bring damage to the government property.

146 of the participants (25.17%) described good citizenship as having respect for others. The participants identified respecting others as having respect for the ideas, beliefs and lifestyles of others. They indicated that accepting people as they are is really important for citizenship. 130 of the participants (22.41%) defined good citizenship as they could keep up with the current issues. The participants remarked that a good citizen is supposed to be interested in both the current issues of Turkey's agenda and the issues world-wide such as wars, famine, poverty, global warming refugees, unemployment and environmental problems. 122 of the participants (21.03%) described good citizenship as they both could know and apply the rights and responsibilities. The participants expressing this view emphasized that a good citizen needs to know about his/her rights and responsibilities and apply these at the same time. They claimed that it is just not enough to know the rights; in case of need, a good citizen is supposed to know how to apply these rights or to take legal action when these rights are abused.

115 of the participants (19.82%) defined good citizenship as following laws. It is stated that laws are necessary for social order and thus good citizens follow the laws. The most mentioned one is traffic rules. 76 participants spoke of traffic rules. 110 of the participants (18.96%) expressed doing citizenship responsibilities such as

paying taxes, voting and military service is necessary for good citizenship. The participants emphasized that voting is a crucial civic responsibility. Moreover, a good citizen is supposed to keep up with the political events and have opinions about the political landscape of the country. The participants delivering the idea of military service are all males. Every male over 20 is to complete his military service. Fulfilling this duty can be postponed to the older ages or men can be exempt from this duty in some conditions.

Having a critical perspective is identified as an indicator of good citizenship by 106 participants (18.27%). These participants stress that a good participant needs to interrogate the events, know to seek his/her rights, view the political events critically and not to accept everything dictated to himself/herself. It is remarked that the citizen is supposed to consider and question the causes and results of political and social events. 97 of the participants (16.72%) defined good citizenship for being successful and educated. The participants mentioning this view highlight that a good citizen is someone who is successful at work, needs to work hard and be educated. They claimed having a good job as a result of receiving education is worthy for good citizenship. Besides, it is underlined that a good citizen is supposed to become successful at work or school and then produce something new for the country.

95 of the participants (16.37%) think that good citizenship requires paying taxes. These participants emphasize paying taxes as an important civic responsibility. 84 of the participants (14.48%) indicated that good citizenship necessitates caring for and respecting family. These participants point out that a good citizen loves his/her parents and respects for them. It is explained that someone who loves his/her family will love his/her country and nation; and if he/she is a good descent, then he/she will be a good citizen. 94 (16.20%) participants stated being interested in environmental issues is a requirement of good citizenship. These participants claimed that a good citizen is sensitive to the environmental issues and responsible for the environmental problems not only in his/her own country but throughout the world. They also highlighted that a good citizen has responsibilities for animals, as well. A good citizen is supposed to protect the nature and struggle for not polluting the seas, rivers and the air. It is emphasized that being thrifty in using energy is a necessity of good citizenship.

46 participants (7.93%) identified good citizenship as working for the community or in other words serving the community. These participants stated that it is important to help elderly and disabled people in the society. Loyalty to Atatürk's principles and revolutions is suggested by 44 pre-service teachers (7.58%). 38 of the participants (6.55%) told that having religious values is necessary for good citizenship. The participants arguing for this view stated that religious duties need to be performed.

DISCUSSION

Fourteen categories emerged in this study investigating the pre-service social studies teachers' perceptions of good citizenship. It can be said that the categories in the present study share similarities with some categories in the studies of Martin (2008) and O'Brien and Smith (2011). In addition, whereas having religious values is not involved in the studies of Martin (2008) and O'Brien and Smith (2011), it emerged in the studies of Doğanay (2009) and Kılınç and Dere (2013). Loyalty to Atatürk's principles and revolutions showed up in this study unlike Doğanay's (2009) and Kılınç and Dere's (2013) studies. Atatürk is the founder of the Republic of Turkey. His revolutions while founding modern Turkey and the principles dominating the Republic of Turkey are involved in constitution of the Republic of Turkey. At the same time, these principles are included Turkish National Education Basic Law No 1739. These principles determine the direction of citizenship education in Turkey in some way. Loyalty to Atatürk's principles and revolutions often heard by nearly all the students in each educational level is expressed by 44 pre-service teachers (7.58%) in this study. This result can be interpreted as this is not actualized with this aspect of the general purposes of Turkish national education specified in National Education Basic Law (1739). While the category of caring/respecting for the family does not show up in O'Brien and Smith's (2011) study, it occurs in Doğanay's (2009) "traditional citizen" model and corresponds with the questionnaire item "A good citizen fulfills his/her family responsibilities" which is included in Kılınç and Dere's (2013) "citizen characteristics based on social anxiety". It can be said that family is an important issue for Turkish individuals in terms of good citizenship.

When the results of the study are examined, it is clear that the categories emerging about the pre-service social studies teachers' perceptions of good citizenship conform to the three types of citizen -personally responsible, participant, justice-oriented- developed by Westheimer and Kahne (2004). Besides, these categories match up with the traditional and social/active citizenship categories defined in Doğanay's (2009) study and Kılınç and Dere's (2013) citizenship models of social anxiety oriented, knowledge oriented and conservatism oriented. The results of the study show that the most repeated categories are having honesty/ethics and being proud of Turkey/patriotism/loyalty. Along with these two categories, the categories such as following laws, paying taxes, voting, doing military service, being educated, having respect for others, loyalty to Atatürk's principles and the family show that pre-service social studies teachers mostly have personal responsible (Westheimer & Kahne, 2004) or traditional citizen (Doğanay, 2009) perceptions. Moreover, some participants stated that a good citizen is supposed to have a critical perspective. This category corresponds with the justice oriented citizen type of

Westheimer and Kahne (2004) and Doğanay's (2009) social/active citizenship model. Some answers given by the participants in this category are below:

"A good citizen needs to interrogate and not to accept the things dictated to him/her." Participant #326.

"Good citizenship primarily requires investigating, interrogating and considering. "A good citizen needs to make conscious decisions." Participant #512

"A good citizen is supposed to be conscious and think about the reasons while voting and paying taxes". Participant #192

"A good citizen should become active about the governance of the country, interrogate the decisions of country rulers and be able to criticize the laws and decisions about his/her country." Participant #192.

In addition to these answers, a significant number of participants stated that they know about their rights and responsibilities and at the same time apply them. While knowing the rights and responsibilities conforms to Kılıncı and Dere's (2013) "knowledge oriented citizen" model, applying these rights and responsibilities matches up with "justice oriented citizen" type of Westheimer and Kahne (2004). Some students' answers in that category can be followed as:

"A good citizen knows about his/her rights and responsibilities and does not hesitate to seek his/her rights." Participant #17.

"A good citizen does not stay silent against injustice and hesitate to take legal challenges." Participant #234.

"A good citizen does not stay silent against social injustice and inequality." Participant #461.

These answers can be interpreted as some students are suited for a citizenship type having a critical perspective which is defined as "justice oriented" by Westheimer and Kahne (2004). However, it can be said that when the general answers are taken into consideration, the number of pre-service teachers having this perspective is not as it was expected. Yet, personal and professional improvements of teachers to whom next generation of a society is commended are crucial. Tertiary education has a basic responsibility for teachers to become successful professionals (Özel, 2014). For this reason, an effective citizenship education is needed for pre-service social studies teachers to have critical perspectives.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The results of the current study illustrate that pre-service social studies teachers perceive a good citizen mostly as personal responsible or in other words traditional. In similar studies conducted in Turkey, the good citizenship perceptions of students, prospective teachers and teachers mainly correspond with the personal responsible citizen type. Along with this, the studies conclude that the number of the citizen models having critical perspectives

needs to be increased in order to improve democracy. Therefore, it is important for pre-service social studies teachers, who are directly concerned with citizenship education, to have active/participatory or justice centered citizenship perception. One of the most significant purposes of social studies is to educate active, productive, participatory citizens having critical perspectives. In order to be able to realize this purpose, pre-service social studies teachers who will teach social studies to students need to have this perspective first. Thus, as future social studies teachers will form the next generation with their citizenship perceptions, it is crucial for pre-service social studies teachers to receive citizenship education which will improve their critical perspectives. For this reason, education and training need to be provided for pre-service social studies teachers to improve this perspective in social studies teaching programs.

Conflict of Interests

The author(s) have not declared any conflict of interests.

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