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Needs analysis of responsibility curriculum for primary school students

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Responsibility is among the most basic concepts that are expected to be taught at early ages and directly affect our personal and social life. Although, it is regarded as a value with its affective dimension; responsibility, a fundamental skill that we should learn formally or informally, starts with the children's introduction to their immediate environment and continues with their school life. In this process, all the tasks that they need to fulfill in compatible with a lot of factors including their ages, the developmental stage and their social environment form and shape their area of responsibility. In these areas of responsibility, children's reactions, behaviors and attitudes should be known. For that reason, the purpose of this study, in which the opinions and thoughts of the parents and class teachers of the 3rd and 4th grade primary school students were taken, is to determine the needs towards responsibility. In this case study, the data collected through semi structured interview from 10 parents and 8 teachers were analyzed through content analysis. The results obtained from the content analysis were discussed in light of the related literature. According to the results, parents and teachers' opinions and thoughts were put into five categories, which are fulfilling their duties, having effective time management, interpersonal relationships and communication, protecting their health and values. It is thought that the results obtained from this study will shed light on curricula which will be developed to gain the skill of responsibility to 3rd and 4th grade students, and will serve for raising more responsible individuals for the future.

Key words: Responsibility, skill, needs analysis.

INTRODUCTION

In our daily life, we witness people kicking street animals for fun; drivers hitting someone and running away and thus, causing that person's death or people causing fires by tossing out their cigarette butts; contractors wanting to earn much more money and thus, risking people's life by constructing buildings with no earthquake resistance; and people harming other people around, destroying their

environment and own life because they do not do their duties well enough and do not care what the outcome of these behaviors are. Knowing responsibilities and acting accordingly are among the duties that everybody should do in order to make themselves and everybody they interact with lead a quality life. People who are unaware of their personal and societal responsibilities are threats

to their environments. The concept of responsibility which plays an important role in people maintaining their personal and social life in a qualified way is defined in various ways. Primarily, Turkish Language Society (TDK, 2016) defines responsibility as "individual's acceptance and accountability for their behaviors and results of any event in their area of authority". Cevizci (1997) suggests that responsibility is the situation where individuals take on all the obligations required in their social status or occupations and accept being accountable for the results of their actions (p. 396). Yavuzer (2016), in his definition of responsibility, states that responsibility is children's implementation of the tasks and duties given according to their age, gender and developmental level from early childhood stage onwards (p. 107). Cüceloğlu (2001) defines responsibility as individuals' being ready to become accountable for the events and issues in their personal boundaries (p. 208). Lucas (1993) states that the core concept of responsibility is that one can be asked the question 'why did you do it?' and be expected to give an answer (p. 298). And Lickona (1991) identifies responsibility as one of the basic qualities that schools should develop in their own students.

According to him; Responsibility is an extension of respect. If we respect other people, we value them. If we value them, we feel a measure of responsibility for their welfare. Responsibility literally means ability to respond. It means orienting towards others, paying attention to them, actively responding to their needs. Responsibility emphasizes our positive obligations to care for each other (pp. 43-44). When the aforementioned definitions are examined, it can easily be seen that different attributes of responsibility are focused. Although, the main focus of these definitions is the same, some definitions emphasize taking the responsibility; some of them stress fulfilling the responsibility; and some others point out accountability. At this point, from Draz (2004)'s definition, it can be understood that this concept includes all these three different emphases: "Responsibility starts when you are called to do a task or perform a duty, and finishes when you accept the call, do the task, and account for it (p. 74)." Responsible people are happy, agreeable, hardworking, accountable, and successful individuals respectful to themselves and others, acting appropriately in every environment, doing their duties accurately and timely, accepting their own mistakes and faults, making their own decisions by themselves and taking the results of these decisions into account (Hayta-Önal, 2005). Unlike responsible people, irresponsible ones are unhappy, non-adaptive, selfish individuals who always complain about something, restrict their existential area, seem to be physically tired and bored with their everyday life, blame others for their own mistakes and faults, become extremely dependent to the others around, assign their own responsibilities to the others, and have little or minimum contact with their own

personal and social life (Geçtan, 1994: 100-104).

All the parents and educators want children to grow up as responsible individuals, and they pursue the possible ways to teach children how to become responsible (Özen, 2001: 13).

It is even stated in the literature, that there is a need for schools to produce more responsible citizens (Anderson et al., 1997; Bickmore, 1997). Also, "according to Lickona (1996), there is a crisis in character, the indicators of which include increases in youth violence, dishonesty, disrespect for traditional authority figures, cruelty to peers, bigotry and hate crime, self-destructive behaviour and a loss work of ethic. He also cites as a reason for concern decreases in the personal and civic responsibility of youth" (Lewis, 2001). As for that Houston (1998) states, "the real goal of education is to produce a total person–one who as a sense of efficacy and a sense of responsibility to self, as well as others." However, one of the most important points in teaching children how to become responsible is to start teaching it at an early age. As mentioned previously, the critical developmental period of teaching how to behave responsively is the early childhood stage (Yavuzer, 2016: 107). In this stage, regarding their developmental characteristics and capabilities, children can be given tasks such as packing their toys after games or helping set the table before dinner; thus, they start learning how to act in a responsible way at an early age. However, if children are not allowed to do anything alone, they will possibly avoid taking responsibility in the following years and expect their parents to do things instead of them as they have always done.

Following the early childhood stage, children start school between the ages of 6 to 10 and when they enter school environment, they take new responsibilities in addition to the ones they have in their houses. During this period, children face the challenge of new responsibilities including obeying school rules, getting on well with their friends, having relationship with other adults besides their parents, and managing their time. When children make their own decisions and take the responsibility for their own behaviors as much as their developmental characteristics and capabilities enable them to do so, they start gaining their personal independence (Yeşilyaprak, 2012: 43). In the first year, children are expected to adapt themselves to this change and from the second year onwards, they are supposed to become aware of their new responsibilities. Starting from their third year at latest, they are expected to fulfil their responsibilities. The importance of "being responsible and acting responsively" has been stressed and highlighted by the Turkish Ministry of National Education (MNE) and thus, it has been reflected and instructed especially in the Life Sciences and Social Sciences Curricula (MNE, 2009, 2015). In these curricula, responsibility are underlined and presented as a

personal trait and value.

The effect of responsibility on personality and social development is highlighted in the related literature. Tozlu (1997) states that development of the societies is directly related to whether individuals develop a sense of responsibility (p.131-134). Similarly, Yontar and Yurtal (2009) suggest that a sense of responsibility is a helpful skill for children to maintain lifetime achievement, and for that reason; failure in developing a sense of responsibility can cause failure at school, at work and in human relations. In the related literature, there are some studies with a focus on the effect of sense of responsibility on individuals' life (Acar, 2012; Hayta-Önal, 2005; Yontar, 2007). However, there are few studies on to what extent children can develop a sense of responsibility and whether children should be given any education to learn to act responsively (Şahan, 2011). Responsibility is not regarded as a skill that is taught directly at home or at school but a personal trait learned indirectly. However, like other skills, responsibility can also be developed in a planned and programmed way. Curricula with a basic aim to teach responsible behaviors can be developed and the content and the teaching learning activities can be formed and prepared entirely to help children develop a sense of responsibility. Undoubtedly, before developing a curriculum, a needs analysis study should be conducted to determine whether there is a need for such a curriculum.

Needs analysis can be simply defined as specifying the real needs, and it is one of the important steps of curriculum development. Detecting what is really needed and specifying the real needs have great importance in testing whether the curriculum goals meet the real needs. Furthermore, determining whether the target curriculum is really necessary help avoid unnecessary expenses and effort and obtain the required data to plan and prepare the educational activities for the curriculum (Demirel, 2011). Before developing a curriculum, the conducted need analysis study puts forward how important the curriculum will be and lighten the whole curriculum development process by leading the curriculum objectives.

The importance of the needs analysis step has been emphasized in the previous curriculum development studies (Budak, 2009; Çalışkan and Çangal, 2013; Doğanay et al., 2014; Koçer, 2013). Determining whether responsibility, which is regarded as an important value in the related literature, should be taught will shed light on the prospective responsibility curricula. In education and teaching process, during studies on teaching children to become responsible and act responsively, initially, it is important to determine the educational needs about this issue. For that reason, the purpose of this study is to determine the needs and expectations from teaching 3rd and 4th grade primary school students how to become responsible individuals.

METHOD

This research is a qualitative case study. The most basic feature of qualitative studies is to examine one or several cases in depth, so factors related to the case (environment, individual, event, process, etc.) are searched through a holistic approach, and how these factors affect and are affected by the related case are discussed (Yıldırım and Şimşek, 2013: 83).

In this research, case study method was preferred because the study focused on teachers and parents' opinions and thoughts about teaching children how to become responsible individuals and act responsively. Moreover, the results of the needs analysis were discussed in light of the related literature to apply a holistic approach in the study.

Participants

In the study, criterion sampling method was utilized to determine the participants. The basic understanding of the criterion sampling method is to study all the cases that meet some predetermined criteria of importance (Yıldırım and Şimşek, 2013: 140). The criteria utilized to select the parents were having a child in the 3rd or 4th grade in primary school. The criteria utilized to select the teachers are being a class teacher. The participant of the study included 10 parents and 8 teachers who meet these criteria.

Data collection tools

The research data was collected through semi structured interview forms prepared by the researchers. Two separate interview forms were prepared for the teachers and parents, and these separate forms had parallel questions. These forms included questions about definition of responsibility, sample responsible behaviors, methods to develop a sense of responsibility, and expectations about this issue. 11 experts (4 psychological counseling and guidance experts, 2 class teachers, 2 curriculum development experts, 2 child development experts, and 1 assessment and evaluation expert) were asked to examine the questions in the forms to test the validity and reliability of the forms. By making necessary adaptations and modifications in light of these experts' analysis and comments on the content and convenience of the interview questions, the final versions of the interview forms were given. The final version of the form designed for the teachers had 12 questions, and the one for the parents had 11 questions.

Data collection

While collecting the research data, the participants were given informed consent about the study. Each participant was called to make an arrangement before the interview and the most appropriate and convenient time and place for the participants were determined in cooperation with them. These interviews were completed in approximately two weeks. The interviews with the teachers were recorded by means of a tape recorder. However, the interviews with the parents were not recorded because they preferred not to do so. During all the interviews, the researchers took notes.

Each interview lasted 20 to 25 min on average. In literature review process, the studies on responsibility and teaching it were reviewed. The main criteria in the choice of the studies in the related literature to be stated in our study were having scientific quality and focusing specifically on responsibility. There were no other criteria utilized for resources.

Data analysis

After the interviews, audio recordings were transcribed and checked by the researchers by listening to the recordings in order to avoid any data loss. The notes taken by the researchers during the interviews with the parents were organized and recorded orderly immediately after the interviews and these organized recorded notes were shown to the parents in order to check whether the answers were true or not. The notes were finalized after each parent approved them. Interview notes and transcriptions were analyzed through QSR NVIVO analysis program. Generally, these programs facilitate researchers' tasks by forming hierarchical classifications, displaying the relationships among codes, and presenting the code structures and patterns in graphics (Glesne, 2013: 286). The main and first step in the content analysis is data encoding. In this research, encoding based on the research data was preferred. In encoding based on the research data, since there is no conceptual structure to help analyze the data, this conceptual structure formed by the researcher as a result of the inductive analysis of the data. In such research, the researcher reads the data line by line and tries to detect the important dimensions in terms of the purpose of the research. Based on the meaningful information observed in the data, researcher produces certain codes and these codes are formed directly from the research data (Yıldırım and Şimşek, 2013: 264). In this scope, in this study, all the notes and transcriptions collected from the interviews with the participants were read in every detail by the researchers; important points were detected and codes were formed. Codes were determined based on the data obtained from the interviews with the participants and common themes were formed based on these codes. Finally, analysis process was completed by stressing the relationship between codes and themes formed by the researchers based on the data collected.

To test the reliability of the research, before the content analysis, researchers coded a teacher interview transcription and a parent interview note. The researchers coded the same interview transcriptions and the notes separately. Then, these three encodings were compared and checked in terms of their similarities and differences. For this purpose, the intercoder agreement formula suggested by Miles and Huberman (1994) was utilized. Using Reliability = Coder agreement/ (Coder agreement + Coder Disagreement) formula, reliability level was calculated as 0.74. The studies with the results higher than .70 from this calculation are accepted as reliable. During the literature review, all the reviewed data related to the responsible behaviors that 3rd and 4th grade primary school students should or can exhibit were systematically classified. In this process, similar behaviors stated in different resources were eliminated. For example, the first responsible behavior expected from the children at this age is to do homework. This responsible behavior was reached in more than one resources but the very first resource that this responsible behavior was stated was cited in order to avoid data repetition. After this elimination, the rest of the values/behaviors were classified according to categories formed as a result of the content analysis.

RESULTS

The encoding diagram with respect to the findings as a result of the interviews with the participants can be seen in Figure 1. As a result of the content analysis, five primary themes were determined by analyzing the parents and teachers' opinions and thoughts together. These themes are using the time effectively, implementing tasks and duties, interpersonal relationships and communication, protecting the health, and values. Based on these themes, secondary themes were formed for some primary themes. Based on the primary theme of using the time effectively, planning and time management secondary themes and codes based on these secondary themes were formed. Similarly, based on the primary theme of implementing tasks and duties, house, environment and society and school secondary themes were determined. The codes based on the primary theme of values are being sensitive, being helpful and being respectful. Moreover, effective listening, communication and cooperation codes were formed based on the primary theme of interpersonal relationships and communication. Lastly, secondary themes, being healthy and being clean and the related codes based on the primary theme of protecting the health were all presented in Figure 1. The data obtained through literature review was classified in terms of the categories formed as a result of the needs analysis and the findings were given in Table 1.

As can be seen in Table 1, most of the findings from the literature review are similar to the ones from the needs analysis. For example, in the scope of being respectful, showing respect to others and having self-respect are also among the findings from this analysis. Likewise, among other similar findings are helping the simple house chores, protecting the nature and environment, tidying the room, and doing homework. However, some findings which were different from the ones obtained through the needs analysis were also observed. For instance, although, some behaviors including keeping one's words, accepting one's faults and mistakes, using polite expressions, using and protecting collective goods attentively, recycling materials, and obeying rules of good manners are highly stressed in the related literature, such responsible behaviors were not observed in the needs analysis. These behaviors highlighted in the related literature but not found as a result of the needs analysis interviews were also added to the findings of this research. As a result of parents' and teachers' opinions and the findings in the related literature, the responsibilities that the students at this age should take can be summarized as in Figure 2.

Based on the parents' and teachers' opinions and thoughts and the related literature review towards teaching children to take responsibility, it can be said that "being responsible and acting responsibly" is a skill that is needed in individual and social dimensions, and children are expected to fulfil their responsibilities according to their ages and developmental stages in order to be able to become successful adults having high self-respect and being sensitive to their environment and society. According to the results, it is clear that students are expected to carry out their duties and tasks, use their time effectively, have good interpersonal relationships
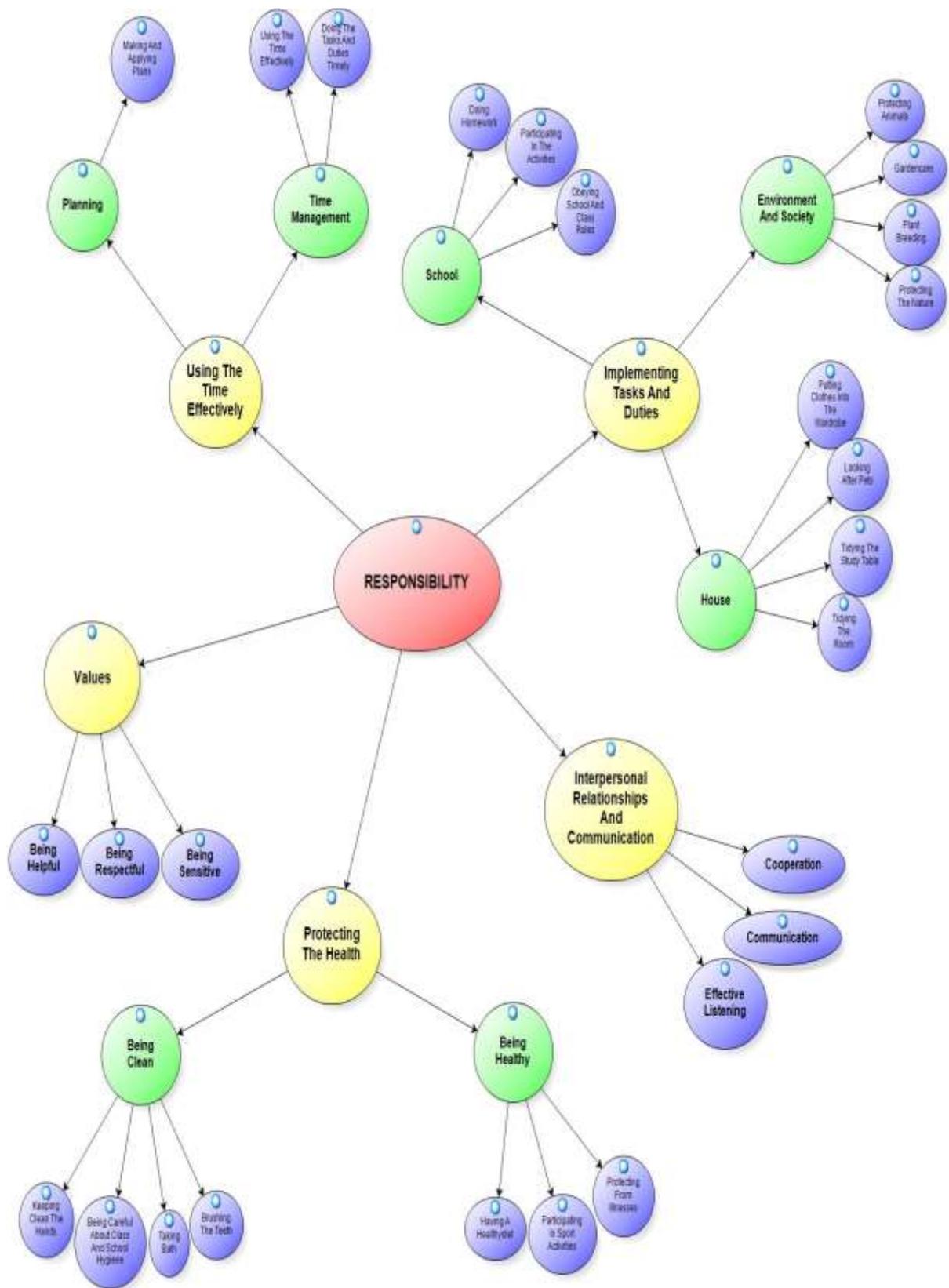
Figure 1. The Encoding Diagram for the teachers and parents' opinions and thoughts about teaching responsibility.

Table 1. The findings from the literature review about teaching responsibility.

Themes	Categories	Traits/behaviors
	Values	Respectful to others Respectful to himself/herself
Characteristics of a responsible person (Hayta-Önal, (2005); Hellison (2014); Merdan (2013).	Implementing duties	Not avoiding taking responsibility The one fulfilling the given responsibility attentively and meticulously
	Time management	Punctual Organized
	Implementing duties	Obeying school rules
Developing responsibility in the first stage of primary education, Hayta-Önal (2005).	Communication	Having relationship with other adults out of the family Getting on well with peers
	Time management	Setting goals Making and applying plans
Personal responsibilities, Şahan (2011).	Implementing duties	Taking care of tasks and duties Internalizing the tasks and duties
Social responsibilities, Canfield & Siccone (1995); Şahan (2011).	Implementing duties	Protecting the nature and environment Participating in the school activities Doing homework timely and orderly
7-12 age period responsibilities, Akın-Bakanay (2016); Stanley (2009).	Implementing duties	Tidying the study table at home Preparing the necessary materials Putting clothes into the wardrobe Taking care of the school materials
	Implementing duties	Preparing for the classes Being careful about class order
Responsible behaviors expected from primary school students, Yurtal & Yontar (2006).	Protecting the health	Being careful about personal hygiene Having a healthy diet Being careful about class hygiene
	Time Management	Coming to the classes on time

Table 1. Cont'd

The concept of responsibility, Kepenekçi (2003).	Value	Keeping his/her words
		Visiting the elderly
	Communication	Sharing tasks and duties
		Using polite expressions
		Greeting
Levels of responsibility, Masser (1990)	Implementing duties	Delivering the equipment after classes
		Helping set and clean the tables before and after meals
		Looking after little siblings
		Looking after pets
	Value	Being volunteer
		Being a good human
Responsibilities of the 3rd grade students, Özerbaş & Gündüz (2014).	Value	Apologizing for his/her mistakes
		Accepting his/her mistakes and faults
	Implementing duties	Accepting the results of the things s/he does
Responsibilities to take in at the age of 8-9, Personal Development and Guidance Unit (2015).	Implementing duties	Informing the parents about the school messages
		Shopping
	Time Management	Organizing a birthday party
		Making daily programs
Third graders responsibility skills, Ministry of National Education (2015).	Implementing duties	Garden care
		Plant breeding
		Recycling materials
		Obeying rules of good manners
		Using and protecting collective goods attentively
	Protecting the health	Obeying the hygiene rules in the common use areas
		Buying healthy food and beverages
Developmental duties and tasks in the late childhood stage; Nazlı (2011).	Communication	Effective listening
Responsibility education, Fisher & Frey (2014).	Communication	Cooperating
	Value	Being independent

Table 1. Cont'd

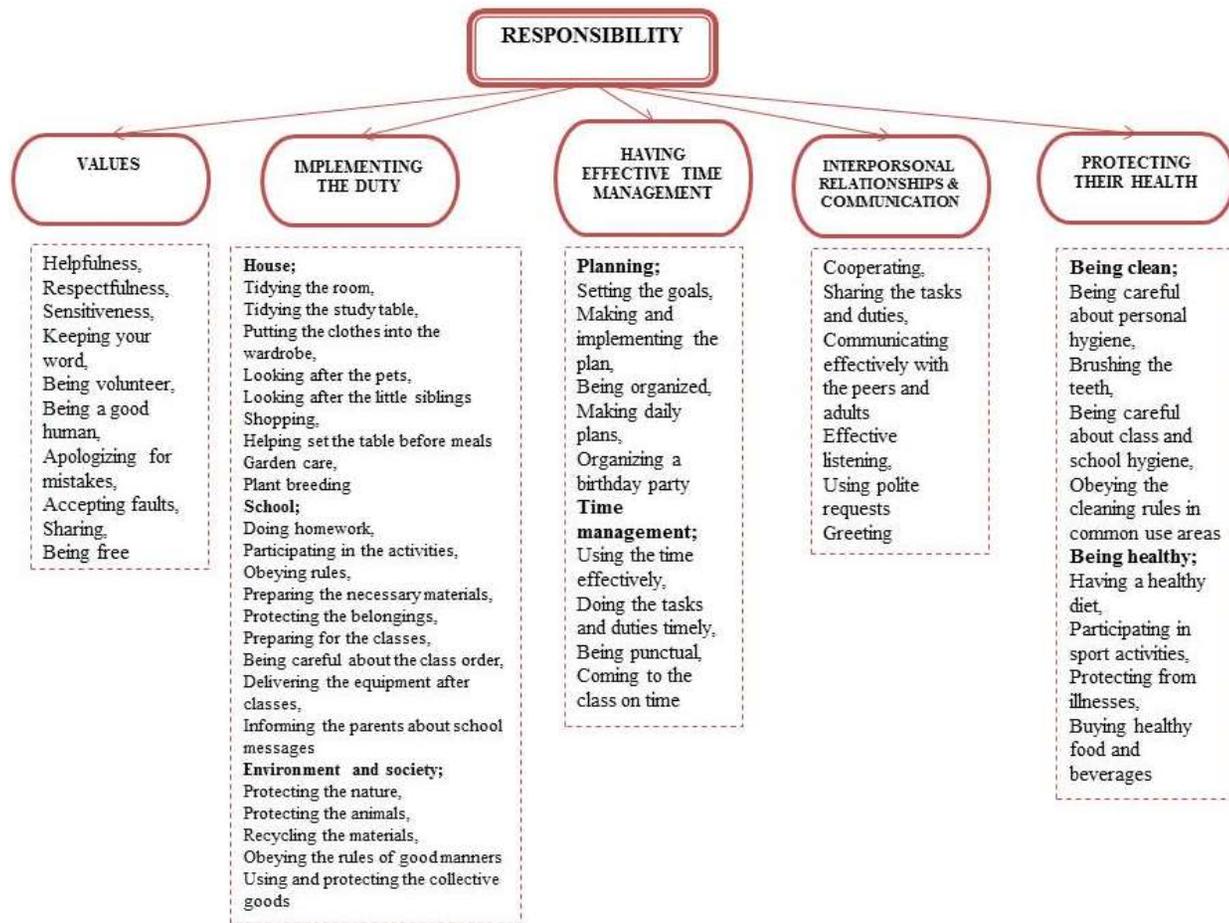| Responsibility education, MacKenzie (2013).	Value	Self-control Respect to the authority
Responsible behaviors, Douglass (2002).	Value	Helping each other

Figure 2. Responsible behaviors and skills expected from 3rd and 4th grade primary school students.

and good communication skills, and protect their health as well as have some values.

CONCLUSION AND DISCUSSIONS

Responsibility, with its individual and social dimensions, has its place in education as either a value or a skill. Responsibility, regarded one of the 12 universal values, which are cooperation, independency, happiness, honesty, love, modesty, peace, respect, responsibility, simplicity, tolerance and unity, in "Living Values Education" project based on the approach "Let's share our values for a better world", has been taught and stressed within the scope of values education at schools since 2010 to 2011 school year. With this education applied to help students develop a sense of responsibility, it is aimed to conduct a series of activities inside and outside the classrooms at schools to teach students how to be responsible and act responsively (Cihan, 2014). Besides this, the need for responsible individuals in society entails rearing children who are aware of their responsibilities and do their duties. Yurtal and Yontal (2006), in their studies, suggest that the most expressed responsible behaviors that teachers expect from their students are fulfilling individual and group tasks, doing their assignments and completing their projects, fulfilling the duties given by their teachers, coming to the class prepared and on time, showing respect to their teachers and peers, listening to them, and being careful about personal and class hygiene. Similarly Hayta-Önal (2005) indicates that the responsible people are hardworking, successful individuals respectful to themselves and others, implementing their duties accurately and timely, accountable, accepting their own mistakes and faults. On the other hand, Lickona (1991) states that "responsibility means being dependable, not letting others down. It means carrying out any any job or duty–in the family, at school, in the workplace–to the best of our ability." Responsibility is not only an educational need but also a basic characteristic trait individuals should have. As Özen (2001) stated that all the parents and educators want children to grow up as responsible individuals and they pursue the possible ways to teach children how to become responsible (p. 13). For that reason, asking parents to express what they think, observe and suggest about developing a sense of responsibility in their children can lead to a more effective and successful responsibility education with full cooperation and interaction of families and school. Such an education will certainly yield permanent positive effects on children in terms of developing a sense of responsibility. According to the results of this research, it is evident that responsible behavior patterns parents and teachers expect from 3rd and 4th grade students to learn and perform are similar to the ones stated in the related

literature. Regarding the parents' and teachers' opinions, thoughts, suggestions and observations and the points stressed in the related literature, responsible behaviors expected from the 3rd and 4th grade students can be put into categories such as implementing their tasks and duties, using their time effectively, interpersonal relationships and communication, protecting their health, and values. To obtain more generalizable data, more parents and teachers and as well as children or other participants that are thought to be effective in this education can be interviewed and asked for their opinions, thoughts, observations and suggestions, and the existing situations and expectations towards responsibility education can be researched.

Conflict of interest

The author has not declared any conflict of interest.

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