

Value of “Helpfulness” in Children’s Magazines *

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Abstract

Many different methods of acquisition of values are described in the previous studies. Some secondary resources may also be required when using these methods. Children's magazines, one of such helpful sources, should be given importance in this regard. Considering the ease of access to children's magazines and their interesting content, it can be said that their content has very significant effects on children. Their content is important in terms of the acquisition of values. The aim of this study is to analyse the content of children’s magazines in acquisition of values to children. Document analysis, one of the qualitative research methods, was used in the study. The sample of the study include four children’s magazine published in Turkey which have the highest circulation. With the “Value Assessment Form” that is developed by the authors, the value of helpfulness in the children’s magazines was analyzed by two different researchers using the content analysis method. The findings of the study indicate that the value of helpfulness is significantly covered in magazines analysed. The order of the children’s magazines in terms of containing the value of helpfulness is as follows: *TRT Çocuk* (TRT Children’s magazine), *National Geographic Kids*, *Araştırmacı Çocuk* (Researchers Kids) and *Bilim Çocuk* (Science Kids). In each issue of all magazines this value is found to be covered.

Keywords: Children’s magazines, document analysis, helpfulness, social studies, values education, qualitative research.

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Çocuk Dergilerinde “Yardımseverlik” Değeri*

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Öz

Değerlerin kazandırılmasının alanyazında pek çok farklı yöntemi açıklanmıştır. Bu yöntemler kullanılırken de bazı yardımcı kaynaklara ihtiyaç duyulabilir. Bu yardımcı kaynaklardan biri olan çocuk dergileri de bu noktada dikkat çekmektedir. Zamanımızda çocuk dergilerine ulaşmanın kolaylığı ve dergilerin ilgi çekiciliği göz önüne alınırsa içeriklerinin çocukları etkilemede oldukça önemli bir yerinin olduğu söylenebilir. Bu kadar etkili bir kaynağın değer kazandırma noktasında içeriklerini ne şekilde düzenlediği bu noktada önemli görülmüştür. Bu sebeple araştırmada çocuk dergilerinin yardımseverlik değerine ne oranda ve ne şekilde yer verdiğini belirlemek amaçlanmıştır. Araştırmada nitel araştırma yöntemlerinden doküman inceleme yöntemi kullanılmıştır. Çalışma grubunu Türkiye’de yayınlanan ve en fazla okuyucuya sahip ilk dört çocuk dergisi oluşturmuştur. Araştırmacılar tarafından hazırlanan “Değer Tespit Formu” yardımıyla dergilerde yer alan yardımseverlik değeri içerik analizi yöntemiyle iki farklı araştırmacı tarafından analiz edilmiştir. Analizler sonucunda, dergilerde yardımseverlik değerine önemli ölçüde rastlanılmıştır. Bu doğrultuda yardımseverlik değerinin tespit durumlarına göre dergiler *TRT Çocuk*, *National Geographic Kids*, *Araştırmacı Çocuk* ve *Bilim Çocuk* dergisi olarak sıralanmıştır. Ayrıca sayılar açısından bakıldığında da dergilerin incelenen her sayısında yardımseverlik değerine yer verdiği tespit edilmiştir.

Anahtar Sözcükler: Çocuk dergisi, doküman inceleme, yardımseverlik, sosyal bilgiler, değerler eğitimi, nitel araştırma.

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Introduction

From early periods societies have attempted to make children acquire the values that are regarded as significant. Therefore, it can be stated that both formal and informal attempts have existed for a long time. Because certain set of principles and understanding should exist in the society and be transmitted to children to make its continuation possible and to develop a democratic society. Particularly efficient transmission of the values through the educational systems has crucial effects on society and the future of the nations. As a result values have been given great importance and considered to be significant, and the discussions on how to transmit these value to future generations have been always on the agenda (Kurtdede Fidan, 2019). The values which have important roles to play in people's behaviour towards the others (Ulusoy & Dilmaç, 2016) were included in formal education over time (Gudmundsdottir, 1991).

Values are considered to have two basic functions: social functions and individual fundtions. Basic social functions of values include the following: controlling the society, showing the ideals for society, preparing necessary environment for social solidarity, shaping social culture, organizing daily life and guiding social behavior. Major individual functions of values are as follows: supporting individuals to socialize by improving their personalities, improving positive character traits among individuals, contributing individuals to make choices over alternatives, behavior assessment and guidance (Keskin, 2016a). Values education involves the development of the individual's personality and social responsibility beyond just transferring information to individuals. This development, which is provided through the values education, increases their sense of belonging to the society they live in and enables them to adapt to the society (Ulusoy & Arslan, 2016). In order to raise a generation that loves their homeland special attention should be paid to values education (Dinçer & Gözel, 2019).

It is difficult to identify the correct time and place of values education. However, it may be suggested that it can be given anytime and anywhere. On the other hand, given that the foundations of personality development are laid from a young age, the starting point of values education can be stated as the family environment (Gündüz, 2020; Keskin, 2016b). Although family environment is the most productive setting for values education (Yılmaz, 2013) educational institutions, particularly basic education schools, have very significant role to play in values education (Kurtdede Fidan, 2016). Students can internalize the values that they acquire at schools through the help of social environment. Therefore, schools should be cognitive-based and make use of all kind of social and educational sources that may have positive effects on value development of students (Chaitanya, 2017).

The course that contain and employ such sources seems to be that of social studies. Given that social studies courses have a historical dimension, a multi-disciplinary nature and contain cultural experience of different societies it can be considered a kind of values education course. In addition, one of the major goals of social studies courses is to produce citizens that requires a focus on values education (Kan, 2010). Research indicates that social studies courses contain numerous secondary sources which may be used to transmit values to students. More specifically, such secondary sources may include newspapers, tales, stories, cartoons, public spots, banners and games (Kurnaz, 2012). Another educational source that can be employed in the social studies courses is children's magazines. Mamık (2020) carried out a study on the use of children's magazines as a teaching and learning material in social studies courses and concluded that in these courses students both have fun and have higher levels of academic achievement. In recent years access to children's magazines has expanded due to some factors, including the increasing number of children's magazines, the introduction of educational information network (EBA) by the Ministry of National Education, improvements in socioeconomic status of the families and increase in the use of Internet. Therefore, children's magazines have become one of the mostly read publications by children. Periodicals targeting children including children's magazines have always attracted the children's interest (Balçı, 2003). Children's magazines have significant contributions to the education of children which cannot be neglected (Yıldız, 2012). Children's magazines are one of the publications towards the development of children (Alabay et. al., 2018) and have their own features (Duran & Özkul, 2018). Earliest examples of children's magazines in Turkey date back to the second half of the 1800s (Kaptan & Sürmeli, 2011; Sarıkaya, 2010; Sezgin, 2019). Following the establishment of the Republic these publications became much more popular. The alphabet reform has many positive effects on the publication of children's

magazines. These magazines attempted to meet the educational needs of children including their literacy development. These magazines, which were published in order to convey certain messages to children, paid special attention to their design and content in order to enable children to understand the messages correctly. It is seen that today's children's magazines continue their development in a way that is in line with technological and scientific developments. Regardless of the period when magazines were published, conveying certain messages to the readers is still one of their common features to create a behavior change which is related to the educational dimension of the magazines (Hazar & Işık, 2017; Kaptan & Sürmeli, 2011; Kuyucu, 2016; Sürmeli, 2010).

It is reported that children's magazines are among the significant educational tools in the social studies courses in introducing both the content of the topics and the values (Yılmaz & Duman, 2018). Particularly magazine content on the ethical topics is crucial to teach children certain behaviours (Kardaş, 2015). Yiğitbaşı (2014) found that the children's magazines included in the sample attach importance to traditional values. Research indicates that children's magazines published in Turkey can be employed as supplementary educational devices to transmit values to children (Alabaş & Kamer, 2016; Alabay, Can, Kandemir & Güney, 2018; Güler, 2019; Okumuş, 2018). Social studies courses are one of the courses in which values are taught to the students. One of the values that are covered in these courses as significant values is that of helpfulness. It can be stated that the value of helpfulness is an universal and important value that is identified with social studies courses. Producing charitable individuals has been always crucial to realize social integrity and to strengthen societies. One of the earliest categorizations of values was developed by Spranger (1928) in which the value of helpfulness is considered to be among the social values whereas Rokeach (1968) regarded the value of helpfulness as one of the ways to gain the core values. In the classification of Schwartz (1992) this value is one of the universal values. The value of helpfulness has always been contained in the social studies curriculum.

There are studies on the children's magazines in terms of content, educational uses and advertisements (Hazar & Işık, 2017; Holiday 2018; Kaptan & Sürmeli, 2011; Karagöz 2019; Kuyucu, 2016; Sürmeli, 2010; Zur, 2014). The studies dealing with the analysis of values in children's magazines are also carried out (Alabay, Can, Kandemir & Güney, 2018; Güler, 2019; Korkusuz, 2020). However, there is no study on the analysis of the value of helpfulness in the social studies curriculum. Children's magazines can be considered as important educational tools in raising awareness about the value of helpfulness. It can be argued that examining children's magazines, which can be used as supplementary resources in social studies courses, from this point of view is important in terms of values education. This study is considered to be important since it provides information to classroom teachers who will use children's magazines as supplementary teaching materials in values education, researchers and publishers. Children's magazines were analyzed within the framework of the helpfulness value, which is considered to be part of the social values. In this context, the aim of this study is to determine the inclusion level of the helpfulness value in the children's magazines which is covered in the social studies curriculum. In parallel to this aim the study attempts to answer the following research question:

1) To what extent is the value of helpfulness included in the content and visuals covered in children's magazines?

Method

Design of the study

The study is designed as a qualitative research and the data were collected using the content analysis. Qualitative research attempts to understand the reasons for social experiences and events (Hancock, Ockleford & Windridge, 2009). In addition, it can be said that qualitative research is the most appropriate method to solve the problems of which variables are unknown and that should be discovered (Creswell, 2012). Vanderstoep and Johnston (2009) argue that content analysis refers to the definition and interpretation of verbal or nonverbal images. The content analysis, on the other hand, is the examination of written and spoken materials that include information about the study topics.

Data source

The data source of the study includes four children's magazines that had the highest circulation based on the data from Turkuvaz Distribution Marketing and YAYSAT (2017) in August 2017 in Turkey (TRT Çocuk, Araştırmacı Çocuk, Bilim Çocuk, and National Geographic Kids). The criterion sampling was used to select the magazines. In the criterion sampling the criteria were developed by researchers (Suri, 2011; Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2018). The criteria used in selecting the children magazines are as follows: children's magazines published in Turkey of which target audience is students who are 6-10 years old and children magazines having the highest circulation in August 2017. As mentioned above four children's magazines, namely TRT Çocuk (TRT Children's magazine), National Geographic Kids, Araştırmacı Çocuk (Researchers Kids) and Bilim Çocuk (Science Kids) are selected for the study which all have the required criteria. Given that *Araştırmacı Çocuk* publishes six volumes per year, the first six volumes of the other magazines were included in the sample.

Data collection and data analysis

In qualitative research texts are among the major data collection tools. The texts were examined using the content analysis which is a reliable and viable method in qualitative research (Bowen, 2009; Hancock, Ockleford & Windridge, 2009; Creswell, 2012; Karasar, 2014). Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2007) state that in content analysis the following texts can be used: diaries, magazines and journals, voice recordings, biographies, autobiographies, time tables, meeting reports, books, newspapers, photographs, story books, brochures and advertisements, etc. Ajagbe et. al. (2015) argue that mass media including magazines are reliable documents that can be used in document analysis. The document analysis method, which can be used as an secondary method in qualitative research, can also be used as a main data collection method (Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2018). The following steps were followed in the content analysis (Karasar, 2014).



Figure 1. Steps of content analysis (Karasar, 2014).

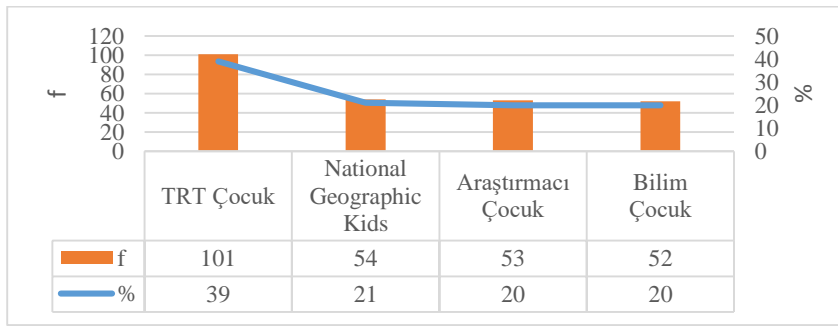
In the first step, accessing the sample, the author sent emails to the editors of the magazines to access the first six issues of the magazines. Following this the issues required were sent to the author which was followed by the second step, namely reading the samples. Each issue of the magazines included in the study was read. Each article in the magazines were coded if they covered any reference to the value of helpfulness. These codes were then transferred into the "Form of Value Analysis" which was developed based on the expert views. The references to the helpfulness in the magazines in the form of helping people, seniors, disabled individuals, friends, animals and nature and of the help in the case of natural disasters and within the social projects are all recorded in this form. The rate of the inclusion of the value of helpfulness in the content and visuals was found. At the last step, namely evaluation, the codes about the value of helpfulness were analysed to find their frequency and percentage. In the discussion of the findings direct statements about these codes are included.

In the analysis of data, the content analysis, which is the process of converting written texts into numerical data by coding based on the pre-established criteria (Balci, 2016), was employed. The purpose of this method is to reach concepts and relationships in order to account for the data collected (Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2018). Therefore, both textual and visual materials in the magazines were analysed. In this way, it was tried to find out to what extent the magazines included the value of helpfulness. The findings are discussed using the samples from the magazines analysed in the study. Samples used in the discussion of the findings are given together with abbreviations for the title, publication year, issue number and page number, such as AÇD, 2017, 1, 33. In the study through the triangulation method the credibility factor of the study was improved. In addition, this method can be

employed with techniques such as triangulation of sources, methods and researcher (Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2018). In the current study it was achieved through the diversification of researchers. Therefore, an expert involved in the study. The code analysis carried out by these two researchers was presented to the expert opinion and the disputes between the researchers were resolved with the feedback. The fit index between them was calculated using the formula developed by Miles and Huberman (1994) which produced 0.88. The ethical permission was taken from the related body (Afyon Kocatepe University, Scientific Research and Publication Ethics Council dated 17.08.2020, and numbered 2020/132).

Results

In this section the findings are discussed regarding the distribution of the content about the value of helpfulness in the children's magazines analysed, namely *Araştırmacı Çocuk*, *Bilim Çocuk*, *National Geographic Kids* ve *TRT Çocuk*. Graphic 1 presents the distribution of such content in these magazines.



Graphic 1. Distribution of the Value of Helpfulness in Children Magazines' Analysed in the Study

As can be seen in Graphic 1 there are much more content in *TRT Çocuk* magazine in terms of materials concerning the value of helpfulness ($f=101$). The order of the magazines in this regard is found to be as follows: *National Geographic Kids* ($f=54$), *Araştırmacı Çocuk* ($f=53$), and *Bilim Çocuk* ($f=52$). In short, the topics related to the value of helpfulness are much more frequent in *TRT Çocuk* magazine in contrast to other three magazines. The frequency of these topics is very similar in the remaining three magazines.

Table 1

Frequency and percentage of the materials related to the value of helpfulness in the issues of the magazines analysed

Magazines\Magazine issues	Issue 1	Issue 2	Issue 3	Issue 4	Issue 5	Issue 6	Total f	%
<i>TRT Çocuk (TRT Children's Magazine)</i>	33	15	15	18	10	10	101	39%
<i>National Geographic Kids</i>	5	8	14	9	12	6	54	21%
<i>Araştırmacı Çocuk (Researchers Kids)</i>	13	6	3	7	18	6	53	20%
<i>Bilim Çocuk (Science Kids)</i>	9	12	7	13	5	6	52	20%

Table 1 presents the frequency and percentage of the materials related to the value of helpfulness in the issues of the magazines analysed in the study. In this regard the magazines differ from one another in terms of their coverage of the value of helpfulness. In other words, the magazines included in the study sample focus on the value of helpfulness in different periods of time. Some examples of the value of helpfulness covered in the magazines are given as follows:



Figure 2. A sample from *TRT Çocuk* magazine in regard to the value of helpfulness (Source: *TRTÇ*, 2017, 4: 22)

In Figure 2 there is a visual material that is about the value of helpfulness. In the visual there a child helping her mother and both of them are happy in this situation. It can be stated that through this material the magazine attempt to acquisition of values of helpfulness to its readers.



Figure 3. A sample from *National Geographic Kids* magazine in regard to the value of helpfulness (Source: *NGK*, 2017, 3: 13).

Figure 3 depicts that Canadian policemen help a duck family passing the street. They stopped the traffic to enable them to pass the street. This shows that helpfulness is not limited to people, but it is also about other living beings. The news is supported by various materials which all contribute to the acquisition of values of helpfulness by the readers.



Figure 4. A sample from *Araştırmacı Çocuk* magazine in regard to the value of helpfulness (Source: *AÇD*, 2017, 1: 22).

As can be seen in Figure 4 the text in the magazine is about a child's memory concerning his visit to the muppet shop. The statement of the child which depicts his enjoyment in helping others is an indication of the attempt to transmit the helpfulness value to children.



Figure 5. A sample text reflecting the value of helpfulness in *Bilim Çocuk* magazine (Source: BÇD, 2017, 5: 43).

Figure 5 depicts a piece used in the section of the magazine entitled "what is friendship?" In the text given in Figure 5, friendship is represented as a way to help each other, and the author expresses satisfaction with this situation. It is thought to convey the value of helpfulness to the readers.



Figure 6. A sample text reflecting the value of helpfulness in *TRT Çocuk* magazine (Source: TRTÇ, 2017, 6: 23).

Figure 6 shows the happiness of children who help an elderly person, prepare an iftar table for her and do their best to have an iftar with her son. In addition, the positive effects of benevolence on people are expressed with the statements in the speech bubble. It can be said that these expressions are attempts to bring the value of benevolence among the audience.



Figure 7. A sample text reflecting the value of helpfulness in *National Geographic Kids* magazine (Source: *National Geographic Kids* magazine, 2017, 02: 39).

The magazines also feature several examples of helpfulness in different countries in the case of natural disasters. In Figure 7 there is a photo showing the avalanche disaster in Italy and the efforts of the volunteers trying to help those injured in this incident. The importance of people with benevolence value becomes much more evident in major disasters such as the incident given in this example. Because individual efforts are not sufficient in such events, and acting collectively ensures that the troubles are resolved in a shorter time. Therefore, more individuals should have the value of helpfulness.



Figure 8. A sample text reflecting the value of helpfulness in *Araştırmacı Çocuk (Researchers Kids)* magazine, (Source: AÇD, 2017, 6: 44).

Figure 8 shows a part of the conversation between the mother and her daughter who asks for permission to do her homework. The mother, who gave permission to the child she requested, reminded her that she can get help from them if she needs. It is thought that giving such an example in the magazine is important in terms of presenting an opinion about the people whom children will receive assistance from.



Figure 9. A sample text reflecting the value of helpfulness in *Bilim Çocuk Dergisi (Science Kids)* magazine, (Source: BÇD, 2017, 3: 13).

Picture 9 shows two friends playing in the playground and use the toy by helping each other. Benevolence is a value that increases the relations of people of all ages and brings people closer to each other at every moment of life. This situation is conveyed with the image through two children playing in the park.



Figure 10. A sample text reflecting the value of helpfulness in *TRT Çocuk Magazine* (*TRT Children's magazine*) magazine, (Source: *TRT Çocuk (TRT Children's magazine)*, 2017, 01: 16).

The magazines analysed in the study contain both images and texts about helping people with disabilities. As can be seen in the figures above, the value of helpfulness is featured in magazines with all its dimensions. Helping the elderly, friends, disabled people, children and animals in different schools is discussed in the magazines. It can be said that there are many visuals and texts on the value of helpfulness in the children's magazines covered in the sample of the study. It may be suggested that teachers may benefit from children's magazines in relation to the learning outcomes in social studies courses and within the scope of the helpfulness value.

Discussion, Conclusion and Recommendations

Visual or textual materials related to the value of helpfulness were found in each issue of the children's magazines examined in the study. It can be seen as a great support in the acquisition of the helpfulness value to children through children's magazines. As stated earlier in regard to the acquisition of the value of helpfulness the order of the magazines is found to be as follows: *TRT Çocuk*, *National Geographic Kids*, *Araştırmacı Çocuk* and *Bilim Çocuk*. In short, *TRT Çocuk* magazine has much more references to the value of helpfulness in contrast to other three children's magazines sampled in the study. Although it is determined that all issues of the magazines analysed include the value of helpfulness, this value should be regularly emphasized and transferred to the readers.

The results of the study indicate that the value of helpfulness is significantly covered in children's magazines. Helpfulness is an important value that increases the relationships between people of all ages and brings people closer to each other. Tulumcu (2015) states that the helpfulness value is included in current children's magazines (*Bilim Çocuk*, *Gonca*, *National Geographic Kids* and *TRT Çocuk*). Güler (2019) argues that the value of helpfulness is emphasized in the magazines *Mavi Kırılmaç*, *TRT Çocuk*, *Kids 7 to 70* published in 2016-2017. It is seen that children's magazines contain the value of helpfulness, which is an important value in terms of establishing healthy communication in social life, increasing social cohesion and finding solutions to common problems. It is seen that magazines include the value of helpfulness in regard to the family members, animals, friends and the elderly. In addition, the positive effects of helpfulness on people are also featured in magazines. The need for people with the helpfulness value arises especially in major disasters. Because it is difficult to deal such events individually, but acting collectively ensures that the troubles are eliminated in a shorter time. Helpfulness is one of the universal values that is very important for both individuals and society. The value of helpfulness is found in elementary school educational programs, textbooks, educational media products and literary products, etc. It is one of the values that should be constantly emphasized in such platforms and which individuals should have. Therefore, it can be expected that children's magazines and all other sources, which target children, should focus on teaching this value.

The results of this study and the other related studies show that children's magazines include the value of helpfulness that individuals should have. The findings of the studies examining the children's media products are generally consistent with the findings obtained in this study. Özyayın (2020) and Korukcu Güngör and Ardahanlı (2015) argue that helpfulness is the most frequent value depicted in cartoons mostly watched by children. The results of the studies on cartoons are also similar with the results of this study. İnan (2016) and Şahin (2019) stated that the value of helpfulness was the most emphasized value in cartoons broadcast on TRT Kids channel. Özgökbel Bilis (2014) also found the same for the movie "Planes", Karakuş (2015) for the "Niloya" cartoons and Selanik Ay and Korkmaz (2017) for the "Küçük Hezarfen" cartoons. In this context, it can be stated that children's magazines are an important teaching material that can be used to transmit the values in social studies lesson. In the studies (Alabaş & Kamer, 2016; Alabay et al., 2018; Okumuş, 2018; Yeter, 2019), it was determined that children's magazines significantly include the values which are contained in the primary school curriculum (such as life studies, social studies and Turkish language). Özdaş (2018) analysed Muzaffer İzgü's book entitled *Ökkeş* and Akkaya (2017) tales of Cyprus, Kılcan (2016) and Kantar (2014) children's books in terms of values. It is found in these studies that the value of helpfulness is the most emphasized value in these materials. This shows how helpfulness value is seen and represented in Turkish literature and in mass media which target children. In the study conducted on the use of children's magazines as a teaching material in social studies courses, it was concluded that children's magazines are effective in achieving the acquisitions stated in the social studies curriculum (Mamık, 2020).

In this study, it is seen that children's magazines are found to significantly include the value of helpfulness and the importance of this value is emphasized to a great extent as it is done to teach this value in social studies courses. In this respect, it can be said that children's magazines can be used in values education as part of the social studies courses. Based on the findings of the study the following suggestions are offered:

- In the transmission of the value of helpfulness to children magazines can be employed.
- The coverage of other values in children's magazines can also be analysed.
- The coverage of the value of helpfulness can be improved in children's magazines.
- The effects of the coverage of the value of helpfulness in children's magazines can be analysed.

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