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Şefika Tatar¹, Oktay Cem Adıgüzel²

¹ Ministry of National Education

² Anadolu University

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The Analysis of Primary and Secondary Education Curricula in Terms of Null Curriculum*

Şefika Tatar^{1**}, Oktay Cem Adıgüzel²

¹ Ministry of National Education

² Anadolu University

Abstract

This study aims to examine primary and secondary education curricula in terms of controversial issues such as human rights, terrorism, sexuality, etc. determined by the participation of teachers, academicians and education union representatives beforehand. This study was designed as a document analysis which is one of the qualitative research methods. In this study, the curricula of the compulsory courses (N=16) of primary and secondary education were examined through content analysis. The curricula were analyzed in terms of controversial issues through a descriptive analysis form which was prepared by the researcher. The document analysis form was based on the controversial themes and sub-themes determined by the participation of teachers, academicians and education union representatives beforehand. The study revealed that controversial issues addressed by the education stakeholders were mostly not covered in the curricula of compulsory courses in primary and secondary education; in other words, it was the null curriculum. Furthermore, it was found that there was no relation between the general objectives and acquisitions of some curricula in terms of controversial issues.

Key words: Controversial issues, Formal curriculum, Null curriculum, Document analysis

Introduction

In many of the definitions related to education, preparing the individuals for the cultural life of the society and equipping them with the knowledge and skills to carry the society forward, is emphasized. These aims are achieved by the formal curriculum of national education (Sönmez, 2002). The curriculum is a comprehensive plan that includes the organization, implementation and evaluation of all educational activities for the training of qualified individuals with the desired behavior characteristics in educational institutions (Sağlam, 2008). The emphasis of formal curriculum on developing cognitive skills, social values and desired behaviors to meet the needs of society caused some disciplines such as science, art, philosophy, and some affective processes to be ignored. Ultimately, it led to the birth of a new concept which is called the *null curriculum* (Eisner, 1985).

The null curriculum is a collection of all information and processes that are necessary but ignored for the student to be prepared for a social life and even as an individual with the potential to transform it. It is a product of critical theory which deals with the result of the existence and absence of something (Wilkinson, 2014). Critical theory asserts that a better world can be created and thus makes historical, cultural, political and ethical guidance in the hope of improving and transforming the world (McLaren, 2011). Critical pedagogy, which is a reflection of critical theory, is one of the transformational education models. According to critical pedagogy, education is valuable to the extent that it helps students liberate themselves from the social conditions that suppress them (Smith, 2000). Curriculum has an ontological reality for those who design, implement, and participate in it, and indirectly for the society affected by it. This ontology is the sum of the reciprocal relationship of both existing and non-existent issues in the curriculum. Because, absence is not solely nothingness; but it is a phenomenon that causally affects real social outcomes. In other words, non-material deprivations in the learning environment can affect the presence or absence of events in a way that is not visible (Brown, 2009). For instance, insufficient environmental education in the curriculum, can affect climate change (Wilkinson, 2014).

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**Corresponding Author: Şefika TATAR, sefika_tatar@hotmail.com, orcid.org/0000-0001-86997451

According to Eisner (1985), the null curriculum has two dimensions. The first dimension is related to cognitive processes and the second dimension is related to issues highlighted or ignored in the curriculum. The null curriculum at the national level is influenced by the general education policy that dominates the country's education system, the interests and capabilities of curriculum specialists, and the policies of the ruling party. In this dimension of the null curriculum, policy makers and curriculum experts deliberately exclude some issues. For example, the curricula of some countries do not include religious beliefs and some of them do not include sexuality (Assemi & Sheikzade, 2013). Issues such as race, gender and religion are often considered to be controversial, and it appears that these issues are generally neglected in the curriculum. Controversial issues are logical disputes with two legitimate opposite perspectives (Levinson, 2008). Hess (1998) argues for a number of reasons why controversial issues should be addressed in the curriculum. Firstly, controversial issues provide for the development of democratic values through cognitive dissonance and moral reasoning. Another benefit of the controversial issues is that these issues enable students to be interested in politics and political participation. Students who exchange ideas on controversial issues through group discussions have the opportunity to see the opposite views, to deepen their ideas and to filter them. Finally, it is believed that controversial issues improve students' critical thinking and interpersonal skills.

In social studies course curriculum in Turkey, which was updated in 2005, controversial issues were addressed under the headings of "Teachers in terms of teaching social studies" and "Explanations on the implementation of the social studies curriculum". In the curriculum updated in 2017, controversial issues in social studies course curriculum were covered under the heading "Points to be considered in practice of teaching social studies". In Turkey, developments related to teaching socioscientific issues in science course curriculum began after 1992. In the curriculum of science courses in 1992, 2000 and 2004; science, technology and community approach has been adopted. In the 8th grade science course curriculum in 2006; DNA, natural selection, adaptation, mutation, modification and evolution were included. Adaptation, mutation, modification and evolution issues were excluded from the course of the science curriculum updated in 2013 (Education Reform Initiative [ERG], 2017). In the curriculum update study in 2017; the issues of heredity, mutation, modification, adaptation were added to the 8th grade science curriculum again; genetic engineering and biotechnology applications were the new headings added to the curriculum.

Many studies have been carried out in the national and international literature on both social sciences and science aspects of controversial issues. However, the relationship between controversial issues and the null curriculum has been addressed in a very limited number of international studies and none of the national studies. Consequently, there is a need for a study that examines the different disciplines in terms of controversial issues and in the context of the null curriculum in Turkey. The aim of this study is to examine updated primary and secondary school curricula (2017) in terms of controversial issues determined by the participation of teachers, academicians and education union representatives beforehand. To this end, the research question in this study is as follows:

- In terms of null curriculum, do the curricula of the compulsory courses in primary and secondary education include controversial issues?

Methodology

This study was designed as a document analysis which is one of the qualitative research methods. Documents are important sources of information to be used effectively in qualitative research. In a study related to education, documents such as textbooks, curriculum, teachers' books, meeting reports, homework and exams can be used as a data source (Bogdan & Biklen, 1992). In the sample selection stage of this research criterion sampling, which is one of the purposive sampling methods, was used. In this sampling method, all situations that meet the predetermined criteria are included in the study (Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2013). The aim of this research is to analyze the compulsory courses in primary and secondary schools in terms of null curriculum. To this end, the curricula of all grade levels (1-8) of the sixteen compulsory courses taught in primary and secondary schools were included in the study. However, the curricula included in this study were examined only in terms of acquisitions related to controversial issues. The reason for choosing primary and secondary school curricula in this study is that the studies on the controversial issues are mostly addressed in these educational levels in the literature.

In this study, the curricula of the courses which are stated as compulsory courses in the weekly course schedule of primary education institutions (<https://ttkb.meb.gov.tr/www/haftalik-ders-cizelgeleri/kategori/7>) were examined through content analysis. The curricula of the compulsory courses examined are "Turkish (TR),

mathematics (MT), life science (LS), science (S), social studies (SS), the revolution history of Turkish Republic and Kemalism (RH), English (EN), religious education and ethics (RE), visual arts (VA), music (M), game and physical activities (GP), physical education and sport (PE), technology and design (TD), traffic safety (TS), information technologies and software (IT), human rights, citizenship and democracy (HR). The primary and secondary education curricula were analyzed through a descriptive analysis form which was prepared by the researcher in order to analyze the curricula in terms of controversial issues. In the category development of document analysis form, controversial issues related to human rights, science and technology, religion and politics, historical events, problems and figures; economy, media, art and philosophy and their sub-themes were used. These themes and their sub-themes were determined through semi structured interviews with primary and secondary education teachers, and open-ended questionnaires with education union representatives and academicians from different departments of faculty of education. After the descriptive analysis form was prepared, four experts from the field analyzed the form. Then, the form was finalized.

In the first phase of document analysis, within the framework of these themes and sub-themes, the acquisitions in all primary and secondary school curricula were examined in terms of controversial issues. Afterwards, acquisitions related to controversial issues were determined in the context of descriptive analysis form. Finally, it was revealed which general objective of the course was related to these acquisitions and in which unit they were covered (See Table 1).

Table 1. An example from the first phase of document analysis

The objectives of courses	Unit	Acquisition Number
3. To know that the rules of law are binding for all, that all persons and organizations are equal before the laws (social sciences-6)	1. Individual and society	SS6.1.5. Argues that the solutions to a problem must be based on rights, responsibilities and freedoms
4. To be aware of freedom of living and believing (religious culture and ethics-7)	6. Religion and culture	RE7.6.5. Explains the concept of secularism

Subsequently, sub-themes on controversial issues were analyzed in terms of general objectives of the course, grade/unit, and the number of acquisitions (See Table 2)

Table 2. An example from the second phase of document analysis

Human Rights (Theme/Sub-themes)	Course	General Objectives	Grade/Unit	Acquisitions
Terrorism and violence	Social sciences	SS7.15-16-17	SS-7.7	SS-7.7.4
Social values	Turkish	TR1. 2-5-9	TR-1.2	TR-1.2.4
Multiculturalism	English	EN2	EN-4.2	EN-4.2.L2

After all the acquisitions related to controversial issues were determined and they were deeply analyzed with regard to their compliance with the objectives of the courses, the units and the grades they were covered, two teachers of each compulsory course analyzed the findings.

In qualitative researches, instead of internal validity, external validity, internal reliability and external reliability; the concepts of credibility, transferability, consistency and justification are used (Yıldırım and Şimşek, 2013). In order to ensure credibility in this research, from the screening of the literature to the creation of the theoretical framework, from the development of data collection tools to the collection, regulation and analysis of the data, the researcher consulted the experts. Furthermore, a detailed description of the findings was made in order to realize the transferability criterion. Regarding the criterion of confirmability in the research, the researcher based on the principle of impartiality at each stage of the research process. All data and their coding procedure were presented to the experts for comparison with raw data.

Results

In this part of the study, it has been revealed to what extent the primary and secondary school curricula cover the controversial issues, which were previously determined by the participation of teachers, academicians and education union representatives.

Results Related to Human Rights Issues

In terms of the number of acquisitions in the primary and secondary education curricula, it is seen that the most frequent theme is human rights. Social values have been the most frequent sub-theme of human rights theme in primary and secondary education curricula. While participation and citizenship is the second in terms of number of acquisitions, multiculturalism is in the third place. There are only six acquisitions related to sexual assault and only five acquisitions on terrorism and violence in primary and secondary education curricula (See Table 3)

Table 3. The number of acquisitions related to human rights theme

Theme	Sub-themes	COURSES															
		RE	M	LS	S	PE	VA	GP	TR	EN	IT	HR	SS	TD	TS	RH	MT
Human Rights	Social values	65	34	26	25	22	22	21	20	18	15	14	13	10	4	2	-
	Participation and citizenship	8	20	22	-	4	-	4	1	5	5	29	29	4	6	10	-
	Multiculturalism	9	9	4	-	13	13	4	-	9	-	13	9	-	-	-	2
	Sexual assault	5	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-
	Terrorism and violence	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	4	1	-	-	-	-

Social values, which is one of the sub-themes of human rights, has been included in the curricula of religious education and ethics course the most and the revolution history of Turkish Republic and Kemalism course the least. When the acquisitions of religious education and ethics course about social values are examined, it is found out that except for the other religions and universal values issues in the 8th grade; the acquisitions are associated with beliefs and prayers specific to the religion of Islam, Hz. Muhammad and his exemplary behaviors and the orders of the Qur'an. Acquisitions related to social values in music course curriculum are respect for the national anthem, other anthems and patriotism. When the acquisitions of the social sciences curriculum related to social values are examined; it is seen that subjects such as national, spiritual and human basic values and the efficient use of resources are addressed at the basic level by associating them with the student's immediate environment. The subject of values in the physical education and sports course and game and physical activities course curriculum are related to national, spiritual and cultural values. Turkish course curriculum includes acquisitions related to the use of Turkish equivalents of words taken from foreign languages, in other words, national language awareness. The most common subject in the English course curriculum is the issue of environmental responsibility. It has been revealed that the social values are mostly related to national values rather than global values.

The participation and citizenship sub-theme mostly takes place in the curricula of human rights, citizenship and democracy, social studies and life sciences courses. The curriculum with the least acquisitions has been the Turkish course curriculum. The democracy issue, which is one of the sub-themes of participation and citizenship, is mentioned in one acquisition in life science curriculum, in six acquisitions in social sciences curriculum and in two acquisitions in the history of Turkish revolution and Kemalism course curriculum. As regards disability rights; technology and design course curriculum has three acquisitions, Turkish course curriculum has one acquisition and human rights, citizenship and democracy course has two acquisitions. In the context of occupational health and safety related to workers' rights, only technology and design course curriculum has one acquisition. Regarding freedom of thought; social sciences curriculum has three, human rights, citizenship and democracy course has two acquisitions, religious education and ethics course curriculum has only one acquisition. In human rights, citizenship and democracy course curriculum and religious education and ethics course curriculum, freedom of religion and conscience is mentioned in one acquisition. The issue of freedom of press has been dealt with in the context of the relationship between the right to receive right information and the freedom of mass communication in an acquisition in social studies course curriculum. The secularism issue is included in one acquisition of religious education and ethics and the history of Turkish revolution and Kemalism course curricula. The right to health issue is mentioned only in one acquisition in the history of Turkish revolution and Kemalism and human rights, citizenship and democracy course curricula. Children's rights issue is included in two acquisitions of the social studies course curriculum and four acquisitions of the human rights citizenship and democracy course curriculum. The issue of law and justice is included in two acquisitions of the human rights citizenship and democracy course curriculum. Participation in the decision making process in the class is mentioned in life science course curriculum in two acquisitions. Freedom of participation as a fundamental right is mentioned in the social sciences course curriculum in one acquisition. Digital citizenship skills are only included in the acquisitions of the information technologies and software course curriculum.

Biotechnological studies and reproductive technologies	-	3	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Organ donation	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Abortion	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Euthanasia	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Evolution theory	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Sexuality	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

Science/scientific knowledge, which is one of the sub-themes of science and technology, has been included in the curriculum of technology and design course the most and physical education and sport and visual arts courses the least. When the acquisitions of technology and design course are examined, it is found out that all the acquisitions are related to the scientific processes that need to be followed from start to finish in a product design. In the science course curriculum, there are five acquisitions that directly address science / scientific knowledge, except for practical science / science and engineering applications part in every unit. In mathematics course curriculum subjects such as data collection, classification, scoreboard and frequency table creation, reading and interpreting simple tables, editing and obtaining data, are covered in acquisitions. In English course curriculum, reading, writing and speaking activities related to key concepts of popular science, facts, and general scientific facts and scientific achievements are included in the acquisitions. In social sciences course curriculum, the issues such as scientists and scientific developments since the foundation of Turkish Republic, the contributions of the scholars who are educated in Turkish-Islamic civilization to the scientific development process, the impact of the developments in Europe on the development of scientific knowledge and free thought, are addressed in the acquisitions. In the curriculum of religious education and ethics course, the acquisitions about the services of the Turks to Islamic civilization and science; physical, biological and social laws in the universe, the importance of reasoning and accurate information in Qur'an are emphasized. In information technology and software course, the acquisitions about recognizing the changes in information and communication technologies from past to present and recognizing the scientists who contributed to the development of information technologies are addressed. Furthermore, in some of the acquisitions students are encouraged to use information from reliable scientific sources and warned about unethical scientific behaviors such as plagiarism. In the revolution of Turkish history and Kemalism course curriculum, Atatürk's rationality and scientific personality are addressed. In an acquisition in visual arts course curriculum, it's stated that current events such as scientific developments, can be utilized for visual art work.

The environmental awareness sub-theme mostly takes place in the curriculum of science course. Acquisitions related to environmental awareness are; interaction between human and environment, taking part in the cleaning and protection of the environment, damages to the environment of battery waste and what to do about it, negative effects of light and noise pollution on the natural life and solutions to reduce this, the importance of biodiversity for natural life and the factors that threaten biodiversity, adverse effects of environmental pollution on human health, recycling and waste control, causes and consequences of acid rain formation, and finally the use of resources in a cost-effective manner. The second curriculum with the highest acquisitions about environmental awareness has been the English course curriculum. The vocabulary and grammar activities related to protecting the environment, natural resources, natural disasters and wild animals are included in the curriculum. In the life science and social sciences courses curricula, the saving of natural resources, environmental sensitivity, recycling, the importance of plants and animal feeding, the effects of natural elements on life and the negative effects of human on natural life, natural disasters and measures to prevent them are discussed. In visual arts, technology and design and Turkish courses curricula, using waste materials and the importance of recycling are addressed. In religious education and ethics course curriculum, examples of Prophet Muhammad's behaviors in keeping nature clean and protecting the animals, are included.

The internet and technology related problems, which is one of the sub-themes of science and technology, have been included in information technologies and software course the most and in the curriculum of technology and design course the least. In information technologies and software course, acquisitions about positive and negative aspects of different information technologies, their effects on physical and mental health; the basic principles and sanctions related to ethics and information ethics, and respect for the rights of others in online environment are covered. In addition, the reliability of digital identities, the accuracy of information on the internet, and ethical principles of reference, copyright, information pollution, cyber bullying, the effects of information technologies on social and cultural life and cybercrime are addressed in the curriculum. In music course curriculum, the need to pay attention to cyber security and ethical rules while creating a music archive are addressed in the acquisitions. In social sciences course curriculum; the effects of technological products on

the individual and nature, the accuracy and reliability of the information reached on the internet, the effects of the use of technology on socialization and social relations, the role of media on social change and interaction and the effects of scientific and technological developments on future life are included. Protecting physical and mental health while using mass media; safe use of technological equipment, such as computers, televisions, mobile phones, tablets, game consoles and household appliances are the acquisitions in life science course curriculum. In Turkish course curriculum, the reliability of the information on the internet, blog and personal web pages has been addressed. It is seen that the effect of the internet and technology on language degeneration is not considered in the curriculum. In science course curriculum, since there is no general objective related to internet and technology, the acquisitions have not been associated with a general objective. The positive and negative effects of technological tools with high voice and the useful and harmful aspects of biotechnological applications for human beings are the issues addressed in the science course curriculum.

The energy resources sub-theme has been included in the curriculum of science course the most and in English course curriculum the least. The resources such as electricity and water required for life and the efficient use of these resources; the importance of renewable energy sources such as fossil fuels; the effects of different types of fuels on human and environment; innovative applications of solar energy in daily life and technology; advantages and disadvantages of hydroelectric, thermal, wind, geothermal and nuclear power plants; the importance of conscious and economical use of electricity in economy are the acquisitions included in science course curriculum. In life science, social sciences and English courses curricula, the importance of electricity and water saving issue is addressed. Designing clean and sustainable energy technologies by using natural resources such as water, wind and sun is included in technology and design course curriculum.

The most acquisitions in terms of healthy diet and food safety belong to life science course, while the minimum acquisitions belong to mathematics and English courses. Being careful about the color, shape, smell and expiry date of the food while buying; feeding with seasonal foods; consuming the nutrients needed by the body in sufficient quantities, at appropriate times and in a balanced manner; washing fruits and vegetables before consuming; are the acquisitions related to healthy diet and food safety in life science course curriculum. The importance of freshness, cleanliness and naturalness of foods; frozen foods, packed foods and their expiration date; health and balanced nutrition relationship are the issues addressed in science course curriculum. However, there is no general objective related to these acquisitions. In physical education and sport and game and physical activities courses curricula, it is focused on how and when the student should be fed before and after physical activities and the relationship between balanced diet and obesity. In English course curriculum, reading food and beverage labels is included in one acquisition. In mathematics course curriculum, it is addressed how to read simple tables about healthy diet and obesity.

Diseases, medicines/vaccines sub-theme is mostly included in English course curriculum. Common diseases such as flu, fever, teeth, head, abdominal pain are mentioned and reading, writing, listening and speaking activities related to these diseases are included in English course curriculum. In science course curriculum; eye defects, the most common diseases in Turkey such as dwarfism, gigantism, diabetes, goiter, sensory organ diseases, bone fractures, rheumatism, diarrhea, ulcers, cancer, jaundice, anemia, pneumonia, influenza and what to do for systemic diseases such as kidney stones, renal insufficiency and finally harms of unconscious drug use are included. In life science course curriculum, rational use of medicines and the relationship between nutrition and health; health problems such as obesity, diabetes, celiac and food allergy are addressed in the acquisitions. Physical education and sport, game and physical activities courses curricula include one acquisition about the relationship between balanced nutrition and obesity.

Global warming and climate change issue is addressed only in science and social sciences courses curricula. The reasons and results of ozone layer thinning, alternative heating solutions to prevent global warming, the measures taken by the countries of the world and the duties and responsibilities of individuals in this regard has been addressed in science course curriculum. In social sciences course, climate change issue is included among other global problems.

Biotechnological studies and reproductive technologies and organ donation issues are only addressed in science course curriculum. Acquisitions related to genetic engineering and biotechnology such as breeding, vaccination, gene transfer, cloning and gene therapy; ethical dilemmas related to these practices and importance of organ donation in terms of social solidarity are included in science course curriculum.

Results Related to Art, Economy, Media, and Philosophy Issues

In terms of the number of acquisitions in primary and secondary education curricula, it is seen that the most frequent third theme is art, economy, media and philosophy. Art has been the most and philosophy has been the least frequent theme in primary and secondary education curricula (See Table 5).

Table 5. The number of acquisitions related to art, economy, media and philosophy theme

Theme	Sub-themes	COURSES											
		VA	M	MT	RH	SS	RE	S	TD	LS	TS	TR	PE
Art,	Art	46	7	3	2	1	1	1	-	-	-	-	-
Economy,	Economy	7	-	1	2	24	-	6	3	2	2	-	-
Media,	Media	2	-	-	-	4	-	-	-	-	-	13	1
Philosophy	Philosophy	-	3	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

The curriculum that includes the most acquisitions about arts is the visual arts course curriculum. The concepts of art, art work and artist are solely focused on. Thus, the art issue has been associated with the acquisitions in cultural arts, art criticism and aesthetic parts of the visual arts curriculum. In music course curriculum, the acquisitions related to the concepts of art, artist and art work, relationship between music and other arts are included. In mathematics course curriculum examples of historical and cultural artifacts (architectural structures, carpet decorations, kilims, etc.) and traditional arts (china, ceramics, weaving, etc.) are addressed. In the revolution history of Turkish Republic and Kemalism course curriculum, reflections of political, social and cultural events of the National Struggle Period on art and literature are addressed. Examples from Ottoman culture, art and aesthetics are included in social sciences course curriculum. In religious education and ethics course curriculum one acquisition related to art is examples of religious motifs in music and architecture.

The curriculum in which the most acquisitions about economy takes place is social studies, and the curriculum with the least acquisitions is mathematics course. In social sciences course curriculum; major economic activities and their impact on the social life of people; analysis of production, distribution and consumption network of basic products and development of new ideas in this regard; occupations developing due to economic activities, the place and importance of provinces in economic relations between countries, the effects of communication and transportation technology in economic relations between countries are the acquisitions related to economy. In visual arts course curriculum, issues such as financial literacy and social financial entrepreneurship, the impact of economic factors on art works, the economic contributions of artists to society and the economic value of the art works are addressed. In science course curriculum, acquisitions related to economy are; recycling, conscious and efficient use of electrical energy, and the contribution of thermal insulation in buildings to family and country economy. Being economical in design development and product design are the acquisitions related to economy in technology and design course curriculum. In life science course curriculum, contribution to the family budget by saving resources at home is addressed in the acquisitions. In the revolution history of Turkish Republic and Kemalism course curriculum; the economic developments in Atatürk's period, the effects of 1929 World Economic Depression on Turkey's economy, the development of the Second World War and economic results of the war on Turkey are addressed in the acquisitions. In mathematics course curriculum, financial literacy is included in one of the acquisitions.

Most of the acquisitions related to media are included in Turkish course curriculum. The aim of the course is to provide the students with a general knowledge on media texts (advertisement, public spot, etc.), the purpose and consistency of their content; interpretation of comics, cartoons and news and how visual commentators convey information. In social science course curriculum, the acquisitions related to media are; media literacy, media as a factor influencing the decision-making process of management; dissemination of international popular culture by media tools and their impact on community life and communication between individuals. In visual arts course curriculum, the guiding effect of elements such as image, text and symbol in contemporary media, are addressed. In one of the acquisitions in physical education and sport course curriculum, media news about physical activities and sports are addressed.

There are a total of four acquisitions about philosophy in primary and secondary education curricula, namely, music and social studies courses curricula. In music course curriculum, people who have contributed to Turkish music with their philosophy and works are discussed. In the social studies course curriculum, philosophy is presented as one of the disciplines that constitute the social sciences.

Results Related to Historical Events, Problems and Figures Issues

In terms of the number of acquisitions in the primary and secondary education curricula, it is seen that the most frequent fourth theme is historical events, problems and figures. Atatürk and Kemalism has been the most and Deportation Law has been the least frequent sub-themes in primary and secondary education curricula. Furthermore, The Cyprus and Aegean Islands issues are not included in primary and secondary education curricula (See Table 6).

Table 6. The number of acquisitions related to historical events, problems and figures theme

Theme	Sub-themes	COURSES						
		RH	M	PE	LS	SS	RE	HR
Historical Events, Problems and Figures	Ataturk and Kemalism	28	13	4	4	4	2	1
	Historical figures	2	-	-	-	1	-	-
	Lausanne Treaty	2	-	-	-	-	-	-
	Deportation Law	1	-	-	-	-	-	-
	The Cyprus issue	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
	Aegean Islands issue	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

Ataturk and Kemalism, which is one of the sub-themes of historical events, problems and figures, has been included in the curriculum of revolution history of Turkish Republic and Kemalism course the most and in the curriculum of human rights, citizenship and democracy course the least. Issues such as Atatürk's principles and reforms, his life and personality, Turkish foreign policy during the period of Atatürk, steps towards democratization during the Atatürk Era, Atatürk's legacy to the Turkish Nation and the death of Atatürk are included in the curricula of revolution history of Turkish Republic and Kemalism and social sciences courses. In the curricula of physical education and sport and music courses, Ataturk's emphasis on science and art is emphasized. Atatürk's birthplace, his mother and father's name, place of death; Atatürk's childhood and his personality traits are included in life science course curriculum. Examples of Atatürk's words about patriotism are included in religious education and ethics course curriculum.

Historical figures sub-theme has only been included in the curricula of revolution history of Turkish Republic and Kemalism and social sciences courses. In both of the courses, the duties and achievements of the heroes of the national struggle on the front are mentioned without naming them.

The sub-themes of the Treaty of Lausanne and deportation law are only included in three acquisitions in the curriculum of revolution history of Turkish Republic and Kemalism course. The Cyprus and Aegean Islands issues are not included in the primary and secondary education curricula.

Results Related to Religion and Politics Issues

In terms of the number of acquisitions in the primary and secondary education curricula, it is seen that the least frequent theme is religion and politics. Religious beliefs and formations sub-theme has been the most, the coup attempts and agricultural policies sub-themes have been the least frequent sub-themes in primary and secondary education curricula. Furthermore, political trust sub-theme is not included in primary and secondary education curricula (See Table 7).

Table 7. The number of acquisitions related to religion and politics theme

Theme	Sub-themes	COURSES					
		RE	M	SS	LS	HR	RH
Religion and Politics	Religious beliefs and formations	11	1	-	-	-	-
	Management system	-	-	9	1	1	-
	Errors in religious interpretation and practice	7	-	-	-	-	-
	Current international political issues	-	-	4	-	-	2
	Differences in political views	-	-	-	-	-	2
	Coup attempts	-	-	1	-	-	-
	Agricultural policies	-	-	-	-	-	1
	Political trust	-	-	-	-	-	-

Religious beliefs and formations, which is one of the sub-themes of religion and politics, has been included in the curriculum of religious education and ethics course the most. Examples of prayer in the Shiism and Bektashism, basic concepts in the Alaouite-Bektashi tradition, the prophets and revelations in the Qur'an, the prophets of the Divine Books, Muharrem fast, the mystical interpretation of Islamic thought and the relevance of religion as a universal phenomenon are emphasized in religious education and ethics course curriculum. The Mevlevi (Dervish) ceremony and poem (nefes) sung by dervishes are addressed as different forms of Turkish music in music course curriculum.

The management system sub-theme is mostly addressed in social studies course curriculum. Different forms of government, the relationship between the legislative, executive and judicial powers in Turkey; factors influencing the decision-making process of management, such as political parties, non-governmental organizations, the media and the public; constitutional rights and responsibilities, basic qualifications of democracy in Turkey are addressed in social studies course curriculum. The management system sub-theme has been addressed in one acquisition at the 3rd grade in the life science course curriculum. In human rights, citizenship and democracy course curriculum, only one acquisition is related to the contribution of the Republican administration to guarantee rights and freedoms.

Errors in religious interpretation and practice sub-theme is only included in religious education and ethics course curriculum. False, incomplete and superficial religious beliefs; misunderstandings about fate, the importance of reason in religious understanding, the emphasis of Qur'an on the use of reason and damages of the abusive missionary activities are addressed in religious education and ethics course curriculum.

A total of six acquisitions is included about the current international political issues sub-theme in the curricula of social studies and revolution history of Turkish Republic and Kemalism courses. Turkey's relations with its neighbors and other Turkish nations, Turkey's roles in the international arena are addressed in four acquisitions of social sciences course curricula. However, it is seen that the issues of terrorism and immigration, which are most emphasized current political problems, are only included in one acquisition. In two acquisitions of the revolution history of Turkish Republic and Kemalism course curriculum, the basic principles and objectives of the Turkish foreign policy during the period of Atatürk are discussed in the context of international relations. In addition, Second World War and the impacts of this war on Turkey's political, social and economic life have been addressed.

In revolution history of Turkish Republic and Kemalism course curriculum; differences in political views sub-theme is related to intellectual movements (Ottomanism, Islamism, Turkism, Westernism) which affected the political and social life in the last period of the Ottoman Empire. Agricultural policies sub-theme has been associated with policies pursued during the period of Atatürk. The coup attempts sub-theme is included in the social studies course curriculum at 6th grade and it's related to 15th July Democracy and National Unity Day. However, the concept of coup is not directly addressed.

Discussion and Conclusion

This study has revealed that the social values, which is the sub-theme of human rights, is the subject which is most included in primary and secondary education curricula, and the values that will enable the students to become a good citizen rather than being a good/global person are highlighted. It is seen that only the right to elect is mentioned, and there is no mention of the right of being elected and participate in political activities. Although there is no hostility against other religions, sects, races and genders in the curricula; it is quite difficult to say that a perspective that precedes multiculturalism is dominant. Moreover, it can be said that the curricula are far from reflecting the current controversial issues such as terror and violence. Furthermore; harassment, rape and incest related issues that are frequently encountered in the society are not included in the curricula.

Science and technology related issues such as history of science, objectivity and scientific inadequacies in Turkey, brain drain with regard to Turkish scientists are not mentioned in the curricula. Deforestation while constructing dams, roads and buildings; damage to air, water and soil by factories; damage caused by pesticides used by farmers to grow crops, natural disasters caused by improper construction; unconscious hunting, animal smuggling and experimental animals are not addressed in the acquisitions related to environmental awareness. Internet and technology-related problems are mostly associated with information technologies, cyber crimes and internet ethics. However, the negative impacts of other technological products on all humanity has not received enough attention in primary and secondary education curricula. Although there is a public opinion against hydroelectric and nuclear power plants in some regions, it has been seen that energy resources issue is

associated with energy saving and national economy in the curricula. Among the many problems that threaten human health and food safety, except for the science course curriculum, only the balanced nutrition, obesity and reading product labels are addressed in the curricula. Furthermore, the conscious use of drugs and antibiotics is only addressed in the life science and science courses curricula, and the cancer illness is only addressed in the science course curriculum. The current environmental problems that concern the whole world such as global warming and climate change is only included in two of the curricula. Although sperm banks, stem cells, delivery methods, in vitro fertilization and experimental studies on embryos, abortion, euthanasia, theory of evolution and sexuality are controversial scientific issues, they are not included in the curricula.

The conflicts about Eastern-Western, contemporary and classical art; examples from contemporary Turkish art and artists are not addressed in the curricula. The issue of economics is mostly based on the relationship between resources, production and consumption. The real economical problems that Turkey faces are not mentioned at all. It has been seen that the controversial issues about media such as perception management and media literacy are not addressed in the curricula. Logic and philosophy, thinking culture and dialectical thinking issues about philosophy are not included in the curricula. It is seen that there is no detail about historical facts about Kemalism and other historical figures of Turkish history. The Lausanne Treaty is considered an international success in revolution history of Turkish Republic and Kemalism course curriculum. The issue of deportation law is addressed only in one achievement. In the religious education and ethics curriculum, only Shiism-Bektashism and four main religions are mentioned at the basic level. Issues such as other sects, communities, real Islam and history of religions are not addressed in the acquisitions. Changes in the constitution and the way in which the state is governed, issues such as political system and regime discussions are not included in the acquisitions related to the management system. Turkey's EU membership and the ongoing war in Turkey's borders are not addressed in the acquisitions related to contemporary international problems. Political disagreements, coup attempts and agricultural policies are not covered in the curricula.

In Turkey, no studies was carried out related to controversial issues in terms of null curriculum. Only in a few studies, social studies course curriculum was analyzed in terms of citizenship education. Thus, the results of this study could be compared only with studies in the field of social studies. Similar to this study's results, in his study Tarman (2006) concluded that 2004-2005 social studies course curriculum didn't include art and culture, gender and regional differences, lifestyles and beliefs. Çayır and Gürkaynak (2007) in their study came to conclusion that citizenship education in the social studies curriculum was a concept of self-interest, nationalist, passive and pro-authority. In her study Ersoy (2014) showed that citizenship education was inadequate to educate students with political literacy and social participation skills in terms of social studies course curriculum.

In international literature, there are limited studies related to null curriculum. In one of the studies Moy (2006) demonstrated European-based captivity as the reason why American racism was a null curriculum in religious education. As a result of the study, it was emphasized that if European-American religious educators wanted to get rid of the captivity of western ideology, they had to face the issue of racism and inform their students about the social and legal consequences of racism and assimilation. Sanjakdar (2011), in her study examined the reasons why sexuality was ignored in the curriculum in a Muslim school in Australia. In his study, Wilkinson (2014) examined the neglect of Muslim contributions to world history in the British national history curriculum. As a result of the study, it was found that the absence of Muslims' contributions in world history in the national curriculum constitutes the neglected dimension of the curriculum and that British Muslim children saw themselves as insignificant citizens of the society. In their study, Harestani, Mahram and Mohammad (2015) aimed at examining the sexual education in terms of null curriculum for male students attending secondary school in Iran. According to the findings, they concluded that the current education system could not meet the needs of students about sexuality and that most of the areas previously identified related to sexuality education were neglected in the curriculum. Misco (2012, 2016) in his studies related to curriculum in South Korea claimed that South Koreans were strictly linked to Confucian culture and tradition. This tradition showed itself in textbooks, national curriculum and teacher behaviors that encourage traditional and sovereign beliefs instead of supporting reflective thinking about controversial issues.

When the findings obtained from the researches in national and international literature are compared, it is seen that some of the issues are contextually controversial and some of them are controversial all around the world. While the controversial issues in the curricula in advanced democracies is based on earlier histories, developing democracies still suffer from the fact that these issues remain within the null curriculum. On the one hand, the efforts of adapting to developing and changing world and raising the new generation in this direction, on the other hand, dominant ideology, social acceptance and value judgments cause chaos in national curriculum of nations. This research has revealed that primary and secondary education curricula in Turkey is one of the best examples of this chaos. According to critical pedagogy, the curriculum is a structure in which a particular form

of knowledge is preferred over others and a group's beliefs and values are superior to others (McLaren, 2011). The basic philosophy of the curriculum in Turkish national education system has been founded on educating individuals who are responsible, critical and innovative, who have problem-solving, decision-making, cooperation and communication skills; who have aesthetic and artistic sensitivity, and also have a common literary and cultural accumulation of humanity. However, when the curricula of the compulsory courses taught in primary and secondary schools are examined, it can be easily seen that the objectives in the basic philosophy of the national curriculum have not been covered in many of the curricula. In 2017, when the curricula were updated; controversial issues concerning human rights, science and technology, religion and politics; history, economy, media, art and philosophy remained within the scope of the null curriculum. Whereas, it has been seen that issues with high national and spiritual beliefs and values are highlighted. The lack of controversial issues in the curricula causes the scope of the null curriculum increase. Consequently, the updated curricula seem to be far from preparing students for the age they are in due to the lack of real controversial issues in most of the curricula.

Recommendations

This research has revealed that although there are many acquisitions related to controversial issues in primary and secondary education curricula, they are mostly related to social values, environmental sensitivity, respect for differences, and so on. Rather than avoiding real controversial issues, confronting them and confronting students with these issues is important to internalize these concepts. For this reason, it is considered that all curricula from pre-primary to higher education should be revised in terms of controversial issues and it would be appropriate to include the controversial issues left in the null curriculum within the scope of the formal curricula.

In this study, it is concluded that the controversial issues are specific to the subject area of each course. However, in the development of primary and secondary school curricula in terms of controversial issues, it is thought that these issues should be considered in an interdisciplinary perspective. In addition, it is seen that some explanations are covered in some acquisitions of courses (eg: Social studies) on how to discuss the controversial issues. In this respect, it's considered to be helpful to add explanations in all the acquisitions about how controversial issues can be addressed.

Finally, it is thought that the time and acquisitions allocated to the controversial issues should be increased in the curricula and if possible, questions related to controversial issues should be asked in the central examinations.

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