

## EXPLORING STUDENTS' PERCEPTIONS OF LIFE STUDIES AND SOCIAL STUDIES COURSES DURING THE PANDEMIC

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### ABSTRACT

Life Studies and Social Studies courses play a vital interdisciplinary role in Turkey, contributing significantly to the social development of primary school students. The correlation between student achievement, motivation, and attitudes towards these subjects constitutes an essential area of research. This study aims to examine students' attitudes towards these two subjects in Turkey during the pandemic.

We delved into the impact of the pandemic on students' attitudes, considering various variables and comparing the pre-pandemic and pandemic periods. A survey model was adopted for this research, involving a randomly selected sample of 612 students from the third and fourth grades of primary school.

The results demonstrated a significant difference in students' attitudes in both classes concerning daily internet usage and gender. Considering factors like study room availability, social circle, and time spent with friends, a significant statistical difference was observed in fourth-graders' attitudes. However, no such difference was identified among the third graders. The study further analyzes and evaluates the changes in students' attitudes during and after the pandemic, providing an overview of the impact of the pandemic on their perception of Life Studies and Social Studies courses.

**Keywords:** Attitude, COVID-19, life studies, social studies, student

## PANDEMİ SÜRECİNDE HAYAT BİLGİSİ VE SOSYAL BİLGİLER DERSLERİNE YÖNELİK ÖĞRENCİ TUTUMLARININ İNCELENMESİ

### ÖZ

Türkiye'deki hayat bilgisi ve sosyal bilgiler derslerinin içerikleri disiplinlerarası olup, ilkökul öğrencilerinin toplumsal gelişiminde önemli bir vizyona sahiptir. Bununla birlikte farklı değişkenler kullanılarak pandemi sürecinin etkileri ile bu sürecin öğrenci tutumlarını nasıl etkilediği incelenmiştir. Bu süreç incelenirken pandemi öncesi ve sonrası dikkate alınmıştır. Bu araştırmadaki süreci gerçekleştirebilmek için genel tarama modeli kullanılmıştır. İlkokul üçüncü ve dördüncü sınıflardan seçkisiz olarak belirlenen 612 öğrenci araştırmaya dâhil edilmiştir. Araştırma sonuçlarına göre internette geçirilen günlük süre ve cinsiyet açısından iki sınıf düzeyinde öğrenci tutumlarının istatistiksel olarak farklılaştığı tespit edilmiştir. Ek olarak çalışma odası, arkadaş çevresinin olup olmaması ve arkadaşlarıyla geçirdikleri süre incelendiğinde, dördüncü sınıflarda öğrenci tutumlarının istatistiksel olarak farklılaştığı; üçüncü sınıflarda ise farklılaşmadığı belirlenmiştir. Bu sonuçlar doğrultusunda pandemi sürecindeki öğrenci tutumları ile pandemi öncesi öğrenci tutumları arasındaki farklılıklar analiz edilerek ortak bir çerçevede değerlendirilmiştir.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** COVID-19, hayat bilgisi, öğrenci, sosyal bilgiler, tutum

### INTRODUCTION

Attitudes of individuals during teaching process directly affect their academic achievement. According to Bohner, Wanke, and Michaela (2002), attitudes play an important role in all steps of data processing. In order for student behaviors to be positive in terms of education, cognitive, affective and behavioral attitudes are expected to be developed in a positive way. While positive attitudes motivate students to be more zealous to attain desirable outcomes, negative attitudes lead them to spend less effort (Fraser & Tosra, 1981). In this respect, positive attitudes are deemed important in terms of affecting student performance and promoting their learning success (Kuniawan, Astalini, Darmaj & Melsayanti, 2019). The quality of experiences in developing attitudes is an important step for developing attitudes. It is predicted that individuals with negative experiences towards a certain object or situation have a negative attitude, and those with positive experiences have a positive attitude (Pehlivan, 1994). When the successful students were asked to talk about their school experiences, they expressed their satisfaction, while those who were unsuccessful expressed their dissatisfaction

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(Jackson & Lahaderna, 1967). Thus, we can say that attitudes towards school and learning significantly predict success (Veresova & Mala, 2016). In short, attitudes are very important. This is because attitudes both express our evaluation and perceptions, and conduct our behaviors (Forgas, Cooper & Crano, 2010, p:10).

One of the first courses focusing on attitudes at primary school level in Turkish education system is life studies course. In life studies, which aims to improve students holistically, individuals learn not only gain knowledge but also learn skills, values and attitudes (Yıldırım, 2021). Life studies course mainly focuses on attitude and values as a means to establish, maintain and strengthen friendship and turn it into a good fellowship (MEB, 2018a). Also, life studies allows children to identify themselves, systematize their knowledge and form a basis for having new information, skills and attitudes (Akinoğlu, 2003). Another course focusing on attitudes is social studies course. Social studies continue to improve this basis created by life studies in terms of positive attitudes and behaviors. Every individual has objectives, values, beliefs and attitudes as well as different factors (Sönmez, 2020). Social studies aim to analyze attitudes and behaviors of individuals, and allow them to question their attitudes and behaviors (MEB, 2018b). Students should internalize processing steps qualifiedly to cope with the problems in daily life, think critically, and acquire good citizenship with a democratic and contemporary understanding of life. Motivation is needed for this internalization to occur and students should develop positive attitudes for the motivation.

COVID-19 emerged in China and affected the whole world. Countries started to take several measures to prevent its spread (Tarkar, 2020). Many governments decided to cease face-to-face education for most of their students and switch to online teaching and virtual education due to COVID-19, which became the biggest challenge that national education systems had ever faced (Daniel, 2020). To prevent the spread of the pandemic, Turkish government ceased face-to-face education and switched to distance education. With this process, many changes occurred from the teaching of the courses to teacher-student interaction (Kırmızıgül, 2020). The Ministry of National Education (MEB) strengthened the infrastructure of the digital education portal called Education Informatics Network (EBA) and created a virtual education environment in cooperation with Turkish Radio and Television (TRT) (Özer, 2020). Despite all measures taken and the efforts of the administrators, teachers and parents, COVID-19 caused many problems in the short and long-terms (Çakın & Külekçi Akyavuz, 2020; Demir & Özdaş, 2020, Akat and Karataş, 2020). Although the pandemic period results were determined to be negative, there was no research on how a change occurred in the attitudes of the students towards the courses, particularly the life and social studies courses. With the pandemic period, dramatic changes happened in education life of students.

### **Literature Review**

In this section, the literature on the life and social studies courses in Turkey has been examined. According to this examine, students' attitudes towards life studies were investigated in several studies conducted by Batmaz (2021), Çetin (2020), Oker & Tay (2019), Sarı (2020), and Tiryaki (2018). Students' attitudes towards life studies course were determined based on the variables such as the concept cartoon (Bütün, 2021), informing families about the theory of multiple intelligences (Bektaş, 2007), scenario-based learning (Ceylan, 2016), teaching with games (Hanbaba & Bektaş, 2012), reflective thinking activities (Yavuz, 2017) the Orff approach (Ira, Ira & Geçer, 2019), analytic stories (Aslan, 2004) and songs (Talşık, 2013). Attitudes of students towards social studies course were also investigated by Aktepe, Tahiroğlu & Sargın (2014); Altıntaş (2005); Ergin (2006); Kılınç & Dere (2015); Özkal & Çetingöz (2006); Özkal, Güngör & Çetingöz (2004); Öztürk (1999); Sidekli (2010); Şimşek & Demir (2012); Tay & Akyürek Tay (2006); Yılmaz & Şeker (2011); Yılmaz and Demir (2014). While examining the attitudes of the students towards social studies, the effect of the use of humor (Oruç, 2010), gender activities (Seçgin & Kurnaz, 2015), virtual museum tours (Yıldırım & Tahiroğlu, 2012), teaching learning strategies (Dikbaş & Hasırcı, 2008), teaching with drama (Zengin & Ulaş, 2021; Öztürk & Sarı, 2018; Kaf & Yılmaz, 2017; Öztürk & Korkmaz, 2020), case study method (İbrahimoğlu & Öztürk, 2013), problem-based learning (Çiftçi, Meydan & Ektem, 2007), concept maps (Yılmaz & Çolak, 2012), blended learning (Saritepeci & Çakır, 2014), research-based learning (Çalışkan & Turan, 2010), experiential learning (Gencil, 2008), layered curriculum

(Gömleksiz & Öner, 2013), computer assisted teaching (Yeşiltaş & Turan, 2015), project-based learning (Ada, Baysal & Kadioğlu, 2009; Öztürk, 2016), 5E model (Akaydın & Kaya, 2018), argumentation-based learning technique (Aksoy & Demirkaya, 2021) and constructivist approach (Çelikkaya & Ünal, 2009; Gökkaya & Tural, 2012) on student attitudes was determined. These studies reported that students' attitudes towards life and social studies courses were positively affected according to the determined variables. The studies have examined students' attitudes towards both courses independently of each other. However, there are limited studies investigating students' attitudes towards both courses simultaneously.

The above-mentioned literature review revealed that there are many studies on student attitudes towards life and social studies courses, however considering the subject area, studies examining students' attitudes towards these two courses are limited. However, the closure of schools, suspension of face-to-face education, continuing with distance education and some students falling behind during roughly two-year pandemic period may have affected student attitudes. In this consideration, this study investigated students' attitudes towards life and social studies courses. Variables that would correspond to the pandemic and could directly affect student attitudes were identified. This present study becomes more authentic as it reveals the differences between student attitudes during the pandemic period and in pre-pandemic period. Although student attitudes towards life and social studies courses are analyzed through individual scales, discussing them holistically under the same framework can surely contribute to the literature. In the light of this information, the study aimed to examine primary school students' attitudes towards life and social studies courses according to different variables during the pandemic. This study sought answers for the following questions.

- 1- Is there a significant difference between third graders' attitude scores towards life studies course and their sex, circle of friends, study room, extracurricular time spent on the Internet and the time spent with friends?
- 2- Is there a significant difference between fourth graders' attitude scores towards social studies course and their sex, circle of friends, study room, extracurricular time spent on the Internet and the time spent with friends?

## **METHOD**

### **Research Method**

The study was conducted using survey model, a quantitative research. Survey research ensures a quantitative or numerical description of the attitudes, trends, or ideas of the population on a sample (Creswell, 2014). According to Fraenkel and Wallen (2006), researchers generally want to have opinions of a mass group of people to form an opinion about a subject or an issue. In this sense, survey model was used to identify students' attitudes towards social and life studies courses during the pandemic. According to Karasar (2010), individuals are defined based on their own conditions in the screening model, which aims to describe an existing situation as it is. In this study also, information about attitudes of the third and fourth grade students was obtained without any intervention. To describe students' attitudes, opinion of an assessment and evaluation expert was obtained. Accordingly, an adequate number of students were included in the sample.

### **Participants**

The participants of the study were third and fourth grade students. When selecting the participants to determine the attitudes towards life studies, the third graders were selected instead of the first and second graders. This is because attitude levels and comprehension skills of the first graders towards this lesson were more developed than the first and second graders. To determine the student attitudes towards social studies, the fourth graders were selected. As to the reasons of selecting the fourth graders, the students switched from life studies course to social studies course and their ages and attitudes were close to each other. To have the adequate number of students to be included in the sample, eight primary schools and the students in these schools were supposed to be enough. Therefore, eight schools were selected randomly. The students were also randomly selected from the determined schools. The total number of students included in the sample was 612. The data collection tools were distributed to all students included in the sample. The researchers analyzed the data collection tools after they administered them. The forms filled out carelessly and incomplete were not

included in the sample as they could negatively affect the reliability and validity of the study; therefore, 54 forms were not included. As a result, the data forms of 263 third graders to determine the attitudes towards the life studies course and 295 fourth graders to determine the attitudes towards the social studies course were accepted.

### Data Collection Tools

The study data were obtained using two different scales. The Attitude Scale towards Life Studies (ASTLS) was used to determine the third grade students' attitudes towards life studies course. The ASTLS was prepared by Zayımoğlu Öztürk and Coşkun (2015) as three-point Likert type scale (yes, partly, no). It consists of 15 items including three negative and 12 positive items. The obtainable total minimum and maximum scores range between 15 and 45 points. A score of 45 points or close to it shows that students have positive attitudes towards life studies course. The Cronbach's alpha value of the scale is .747.

The Attitude Scale towards Social Studies (ASTSS) was used to determine the fourth grade students' attitudes towards social studies course. The ASTSS was developed by Evin Gencil (2006). It consists of 35 items including 16 negative and 19 positive items. It uses a five-point Likert type scale (I strongly agree, I agree, I am indecisive, I disagree, and I strongly disagree). The obtainable total minimum and maximum scores range between 35 and 175 points. A score of 35-58 was deemed as "very negative", 59-91 "negative", 92-124 "moderately positive", 125-157 "positive" and 156-175 "very positive". The reliability coefficient was found to be .95.

### Data Analysis

To determine analysis techniques used in the study, the data were checked in terms of whether they were normally distributed. The data of the analysis are given in Table 1.

**Table 1.** Descriptive statistics of the scales

Descriptive statistics	3rd graders (ASTLS)	4th graders (ASTSS)
N	263	295
Mean	19.5	83.6
Median	19.0	83.0
Mode	17.0	73.0
Standard deviation	3.49	15.3
Minimum	15.0	47.0
Maximum	29.0	122
Skewness	.571	.169
Standard error skewness	.150	.142
Kurtosis	-.611	-.235
Standard error kurtosis	.299	.283

Considering the statistical data of both scales in Table 1, the mean, median and mode in both scales are close to each other. Considering the standard deviation, kurtosis, skewness and error values, the ASTSS was closer to the normal distribution compared to ASTLS. Furthermore, taking into account the kurtosis, skewness and error values of the ASTLS, it shows a normal distribution in terms of the skewness coefficient (SC=.42), though it is not like ASTSS values. According to Büyüköztürk (2013), a skewness coefficient score between -1 and +1 does not indicate a significant deviation from the normal distribution. Accordingly, the data obtained were coherent with the parametric analysis, considering the sample size. T-test, ANOVA and descriptive statistics were used for comparisons between groups by using the data collected using the Jamovi 1.8.1 and R version 4.0.3 (2020-10-10) software.

### FINDINGS

The statistical procedures regarding the findings obtained according to the data obtained in line with the problem questions of the research are presented below.

**Table 2.** T-test attitude scores of the students for life and social studies courses according to gender

Variable	Gender	N	X	Ss	t	Sd	p	Cohen's d
3rd graders	Male	132	20.2	3.62	3.25	261	.001	.401
	Female	131	18.8	3.22				
4th graders	Male	134	85.9	15.7	2.45	293	.015	.286
	Female	161	81.6	14.7				

p&lt;.05

The variance values of the attitude scores are homogeneously distributed in the third grade male and female student groups [ $F(131-130)=1.26$ ;  $p(.1838)>.05$ ] and in the fourth grade male and female groups [ $F(133-160)=1.13$ ;  $p(.446)>.05$ ]. Considering the t-test results for the attitude scores of third year female and male students, there was a statistically significant difference between the mean scores of the two groups [ $t(261)=3.25$ ;  $p<.05$ ]. Thus, attitude scores of male students ( $=20.2$ ) were found to be more positive than those of female students ( $=18.8$ ). Considering the effect size between the groups according to the gender variable of the third grade, there was a significant difference with a small effect value ( $d=.40$ ). Considering the t-test result comparison of the attitude scores of fourth year female and male students, there was a statistically significant difference between the mean scores of the two groups [ $t(293)=2.45$ ;  $p<.05$ ]. Thus, attitude scores of male students ( $=85.9$ ) were found to be more positive than those of female students ( $=81.6$ ). Considering the Cohen's d effect size between the groups according to the gender variable of the fourth grade, there was a significant difference with a small effect value ( $d=.28$ ).

**Table 3.** T-Test Attitude Scores of the Students for Life and Social Studies Courses According to Circle of Friends

Variable	Circle of friends	N	X	Ss	t	Sd	p	Cohen's d
3rd graders	Yes	239	19.5	3.48	-.343	261	.732	
	No	24	19.7	3.61				
4th graders	Yes	269	82.8	15	-2.76	293	.006	-.568
	No	26	91.4	15.8				

p&lt;.05

According to the table, the variance values of the attitude scores are homogeneously distributed in the third grade students with and without friends [ $F(238-23)=.933$ ;  $p(.7567)>.05$ ] and in the fourth grade students with and without friends [ $F(268-25)=.905$ ;  $p(.674)>.05$ ]. Considering the t-test result comparison of the attitude scores of third year students with and without friends, there was not any statistically significant difference between the mean scores of the two groups [ $t(261)=-0.343$ ;  $p>.05$ ]. Considering the t-test result comparison of the attitude scores of fourth year students with and without friends, there was a statistically significant difference between the mean scores of the two groups [ $t(293)=-2.76$ ;  $p<.05$ ]. Thus, attitude scores of the students without friends ( $=91.4$ ) were found to be more positive than those with friends ( $=82.8$ ). Considering the effect size between the groups, there was a significant difference with a small effect value ( $d=-.56$ ).

**Table 4.** T-Test attitude scores of the students for life and social studies courses according to study room

Variable	Study room	N	X	Ss	t	Sd	p	Cohen's d
3rd graders	Yes	200	19.5	3.49	-.0850	261	.932	
	No	63	19.5	3.52				
4th graders	Yes	209	81.1	15.2	-4.40	293	1.5e-05	-.564
	No	86	89.5	13.8				

p&lt;.05

According to the table, the variance values of the students' attitude scores regarding whether there is a study room or not for the third grade students [ $F(199-62)=.982$ ;  $p(.901)>.05$ ] and for the fourth year students [ $F(208-85)=1.22$ ;  $p(.296)>.05$ ] are homogeneously distributed. Considering the t-test result comparison of the attitude scores of third year students with and without a study room, there was not any statistically significant difference between the mean scores of the two groups [ $t(261)=-.0850$ ;  $p>.05$ ]. Considering the t-test result comparison of the attitude scores of fourth year students with and without a study room, there was a statistically significant difference between the mean scores of the two groups [ $t(293)=4.40$ ;  $p<.05$ ]. Thus, attitude scores of the students without a study room in their homes ( $=89.5$ ) were found to be more positive than those with a study room ( $=81.1$ ). Considering the effect size among the fourth grade groups, there was a significant difference with a moderate effect value ( $d=-.56$ ).

**Table 5.** One-way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) results for the comparison of student's attitude scores towards life and social studies courses and the extracurricular time spent on the internet

Variable	Time	N	X	Ss	F	Sd	p	$\eta^2$	Sig.	Cohen's d
<b>3rd graders</b>	0-1 hours	199	19.2	3.39	3.73	2 260	.02	0.03	1-2	-.450
	1-2 hours	43	20.7	3.75					p=.021	
	2-↑ hours	21	19.9	3.44						
<b>4th graders</b>	0-1 hours	216	81.6	14.7	7.07	2 292	.00	0.05	1-2	-.436
	1-2 hours	58	88.2	14.4					p=.010	
	2-↑ hours	21	90.9	18.6					1-3 p=.019	

$p<.05$

Considering students' variance values for attitude scores according to extracurricular time spent on the Internet, variance values are homogeneously distributed both in the third grade [ $F(2-260)= 0.742$ ;  $p(.690)>.05$ ] and in the fourth grade [ $F(2-92)= 2.38$ ;  $p(.305)>.05$ ]. As shown in Table 5, according to ANOVA results for the students' attitude scores towards life and social studies courses, there is significant difference between the daily time spent on the Internet by the third graders [ $F(2-260)= 3.73$ ;  $p<.05$ ] and fourth graders [ $F(2-292)= 7.07$ ;  $p<.05$ ]. As for the effect size between the groups, there was a significant difference at low level in both third graders ( $\eta^2=0.03$ ) and fourth graders ( $\eta^2=0.05$ ). According to the Tukey results, one of the post-hoc test statistics made to find the source of the difference between the groups, there was a significant difference in the 0-1 to 1-2 hours in third grade; 0-1 and 1-2 hours in the fourth grade, and 0-1 and 2 hours and more groups. The attitude scores of third graders who spent 1-2 hours on the Internet towards life studies ( $=20.7$ ) were more positive than those of the students who spent 0-1 hour time ( $=19.2$ ). Considering the effect size between these groups, there was a significant difference with a small effect value ( $d=-.450$ ).

The attitude scores of the fourth graders who spent 2 hours or more on the internet ( $=90.9$ ) were more positive than those of the students who spent 1-2 hours ( $=88.2$ ) and those of the students who spent 0-1 hours ( $=81.6$ ). Considering the effect size among the fourth graders, there was a significant difference between the first and second groups with a small effect value ( $d=-.436$ ) and a moderate effect value ( $d=-.620$ ) between the first and third groups.

**Table 6.** One-way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) results for the comparison of student's attitude scores towards life and social studies courses and the time spent with their friends

Variable	Time	N	X	Ss	F	Sd	P	$\eta^2$	Sig.	Cohen's d
<b>3rd graders</b>	0-1 hours	143	19.2	3.39	2.29	2 260	.10			
	1-2 hours	76	19.4	3.37						
	2-↑ hours	44	20.5	3.90						
<b>4th graders</b>	0-1 hours	141	81.4	14.5	3.51	2 292	.03	.024	1-3	-.396
	1-2 hours	92	84.3	15.2					p=.027	
	2-↑ hours	62	87.4	16.4						

$p<.05$

Considering students' variance values for attitude scores according to the time spent with friends, variance values are homogeneously distributed in the third grade [ $F(2-260)= 1.54; p(.464)>.05$ ] and in the fourth grade [ $F(2-92)= 1.37; p(.505)>.05$ ]. As shown in Table 6, the ANOVA results for the students' attitude scores towards life studies showed that there was no significant difference regarding the time spent by the third graders with their friends [ $F(2-260)= 2.29; p>.05$ ]. There was a significant difference between the attitude scores of the fourth graders towards the social studies course and the time spent with their friends [ $F(2-292)= 3.51; p<.05$ ]. Considering the effect size among the fourth grade groups, there was a significant difference with a low effect value ( $\eta^2=0.02$ ). According to the Tukey results, there was a significant difference in the 0-1 and 2 hours and more groups in the fourth grade. The attitude scores of the fourth graders who spent 2 hours and more with their friends towards life studies ( $=87.4$ ) were more positive than those of the students who spent 0-1 hour ( $=81.4$ ). Considering the effect size between these groups, there was a significant difference with a small effect value ( $d=-.396$ ).

## **DISCUSSION and RESULT**

This study aimed to examine the attitudes of the primary school students towards life and social studies courses during the pandemic according to different variables. Therefore, the data obtained from the third graders and fourth graders were analyzed under the sub-questions of the research. The obtained data based on the findings from the data analysis were presented and discussed.

The results of the students' attitude scores towards life and social studies according to gender significantly differed at both grade levels. The effect size of the third grade was found to be bigger than that of the fourth grade. When compared by gender, male students had more positive attitudes than female students in both courses. While some research on the social studies course (Özkal & Çetingöz, 2006; Öztürk, 1999; Uzun, 2006) supported this finding; other studies reported that female students showed more positive attitudes towards the social studies course than male studies (Altıntaş, 2005; Çalışkan & Turan; 2010; Ergin, 2006; Kılınç & Dere, 2015; Özkal, 2013; Özkal, Güngör & Çetingöz, 2004; Tay & Akyürek Tay, 2006; Yalman & Çiftçi, 2019; Yılmaz & Demir, 2014). The literature shows that female students have more positive attitudes towards these courses compared to male students. However, this present study shows that male students are more positive. Considering that COVID-19 pandemic caused many changes in individual and social life (Karataş, 2020), the change in the attitudes may be attributed to the effect of the pandemic process. On the other side, the schools were shut down for a certain period of time, lockdowns and social distancing rules imposed to decrease the spread of the pandemic (Demir & Özdaş, 2021; Ercan & Keklicek, 2020). This decreased the time spent outside by boys, thus developed a positive attitude in them.

According to whether they had study rooms or not, the fourth grade students' attitudes towards the course differed statistically, however, those of the third graders did not differ. This shows that attitudes of the fourth graders with no study room towards social studies were more positive. The studies conducted by Şimşek and Demir (2012) and Uzun (2006) found that the attitudes of the students with low socio-economic status towards the social studies course were more positive, which support the present study. However, the study conducted by Yılmaz and Demir (2014) found that attitudes of the students with a study room were more positive towards social studies course. The study of Aydın and Keskin (2017) found that anxiety levels of the students with a study room were lower. This study also anticipated that the students with a study room would have more positive attitudes towards life and social studies courses. However, there was no finding to support this expectation. This result can be associated with the difference between having a study room and having a study habit as pointed by Yiğit and Kaçire (2015).

The attitudes of the students who spent 1-2 hours to 2 hours or more on the internet at both grade levels were more positive than the students who spent up to 1 hour. The study of Yılmaz and Demir (2014) showed no significant difference in the student attitudes towards social studies in terms of time. On the other hand, the present study found that students who spent 1 to 4 hours on the internet had more positive attitudes than those who spent 2 to 3 hours. In the survey on attitudes, a significant correlation was determined between academic achievement and attitude (Tay & Akyürek Tay,

2006). In addition, the studies examining the relationships between academic achievement and Internet addiction showed that as the time spent on the Internet increases, the addiction to it increases, also the academic achievement of the students decreases as the addiction to the Internet increases (Stavropoulos, Alexandraki & Motti-Stefanidi, 2013; Türel & Toraman, 2015). In the distance education during the pandemic, the time the students spent on the Internet and the responsibilities of parents regarding education in that process increased (Kaya & Dilekçi, 2021). The students should not keep away from life technologies so that they can develop positive attitudes towards social studies course. With the rapid development in science and technology and the changes happening with this development, individuals are expected to figure out innovations and developments as well as being aware of their own responsibilities. The conditions of new life need for a change in learning approaches (Ünal & Çelikkaya, 2009). This finding from the study shows that the students' time spent on the internet and thus their attitudes towards it have changed and they use it more as an education aid.

A significant difference was found between the fourth students' attitude mean score according to whether having a circle of friends. Thus, the students with no circle of friends had more positive attitudes than those with a circle of friends. Furthermore, considering students' attitudes towards life and social studies according to the time spent with their friends, a significant difference was found in the fourth grade. However, there was no significant difference in the third grade; yet there was a linear parallelism between the time they spent with their friends and their attitude scores towards these courses at both grade levels. Özgök and Sarı (2016) stated that the students with high level of commitment to their friends had higher academic achievement than those with low level of commitment, which supports the present study. Also, the study conducted by Oral and Yurtal (2008) stated that successful students made friends more easily and had more positive friendships. According to Köksal, Dilci and Koç (2013), teachers' opinions indicated that students with social problems had low academic achievement and motivation and participated less in the courses. The present study also stated that some unsocialized students were successful. That students could not receive face-to-face education for a long time and lockdowns were enforced from time to time during the pandemic caused students to spend more time at home and particularly to spend more time using electronic devices such as computers, tablets, smart phones due to online courses. These factors might have affected students' interactions with their friends and the time they spent on the Internet.

Attitudes of the students towards ASTLS and ASTSS were analyzed according to different variables. Considering the students' attitude mean total, their attitudes towards both life and social studies courses were negative in general. One of the factors affecting student attitudes is teachers who are a guide for their students in every sense. The teacher-student relationship might have been interrupted by the pandemic, and this might have influenced student attitudes negatively. A study which investigated student attitudes found that students' attitudes towards social studies courses were lower compared to other courses (Haladyna & Thomas, 1979). The study of Zoe and Hoge (2005), which supports the present study, pointed that the students' attitudes towards the social studies course were negative, the students generally had positive attitudes towards other courses such as mathematics and life studies, and these courses were generally entertaining, useful and challenging; however, they described the social studies course as boring and useless. Governale (1997) conducted a study with students who least liked social studies and found that their reasons were that they found it neither interesting nor challenging. An important factor to develop students' attitude towards social studies is the teacher's style of teaching, that is, how they treat students. This style means trust, diversity, enthusiasm, justice, formality, direction of target, praise and reinforcement, commitment to learning, and support for the individual (McGowan, Sutton & Smith, 1990). Because students, who have serious problems, cannot overcome their experiences, they need teachers' efforts so as to make progress (Savage, 2003). It may be the most important element that teacher attitudes during the course have a direct relationship with students' learning (James & Marlin, 1991), and students' attitudes towards the social studies course can be promoted through necessary interventions (Governale, 1997).



## LIMITATIONS and SUGGESTIONS

In line with the study findings, these can be recommended: Male students were found to develop positive attitudes during the pandemic. So, parents can be encouraged to provide their support after the pandemic too because this development was considered to stem from the studies under their control. The focus should be on helping students to have studying habit rather than study room so that they can have positive attitudes towards courses. Because spending time and playing games with their friends positively affect their attitudes towards courses, they should be allowed to socialize with their friends in a controlled manner. Although teachers are a very important factor, cooperation of administrators, teachers and parents is vital for students to develop positive attitudes. The directorates of national education should administer attitude scales to students for basic courses at the end of each term. Based on the results, students' attitudes should be evaluated. The processes should be monitored and controlled until students develop positive attitudes. This study investigated student attitudes towards life and social studies courses in the pandemic process. As can be seen from the above explanations, the current study is subject to some limitations. First of all, this study was carried out with primary school students studying in public schools. The second is that it is limited to life and social studies lessons. Studies can be diversified by choosing students from older ages in different fields. Again in this process, conducting a research on the identification of teacher attitudes towards their students can make an important contribution to and ensure integrity in the literature in terms of unity and experiences in a potential pandemic recurrence in future.

## Ethical Consideration

Approval was obtained from Siirt University Ethics Committee dated 17/01/2021 No. 46 prior to the research.

## Conflict of Interest

There are no conflicts of interest.

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## Uzun Öz

Bireyin öğretim sürecine yönelik oluşturduğu tutumlar okul başarısını doğrudan etkilemektedir. Bohner, Wanke, ve Michaela'ya (2002) göre tutumlar bilgi işleme sürecinin tüm aşamalarında önemli bir rol oynamaktadır. Öğrenci davranışlarının eğitim açısından pozitif olabilmesi için bilişsel, duyuşsal ve davranısal olarak tutumlarının olumlu yönde geliştirilmesi beklenmektedir. Olumlu tutum, istenen sonuca ulaşmak için öğrenciyi daha gayretli olmaya sevk ederken, olumsuz tutum daha az çaba sarf etmelerine sebep olmaktadır (Fraser and Tosra, 1981). Bu açıdan olumlu tutum, öğrencilerin performansını etkileyebilme ve öğrenme başarısını artırabilme açısından önemli kabul edilmektedir (Kuniawan, Astalini, Darmaj ve Melsayanti, 2019). Tutum gelişiminde yaşantıların niteliği tutum kazanımında önemli bir basamaktır. Belli bir obje veya duruma yönelik olumsuz yaşantılar geçiren bireylerin olumsuz tutuma, olumlu yaşantılar geçirenlerin ise olumlu tutuma sahip olması ön görülmektedir (Pehlivan, 1994). Okulda başarılı olan öğrencilerden okul deneyimlerini anlatmaları istendiğinde memnuniyetlerini, başarısız olanlar ise memnuniyetsizliklerini ifade etmektedirler (Jackson and Lahaderna, 1967). Dolayısıyla okula ve öğrenmeye yönelik tutumun akademik başarıyı önemli ölçüde yordayacağı söylenebilir (Veresova and Mala, 2016). Kısaca, tutumlar önemlidir. Çünkü tutumlar hem değerlendirmemizi ifade eder hem de algılarımızı etkiler ve davranışlarımıza rehberlik ederler (Forgas, Cooper ve Crano, 2010:10). Türk eğitim sisteminde, ilkökul düzeyinde, tutumlar üzerinde duran ilk derslerden biri hayat bilgisi dersidir. Öğrencinin bir bütün olarak gelişmesini amaçlayan hayat bilgisi dersinde bireye bilgi kadar beceri, değer ve tutumlar kazandırılmaktadır (Yıldırım, 2021). Hayat bilgisi dersi; arkadaşlık bağlarının oluşturulması, korunması, güçlendirilmesi ve dostluğa dönüştürülmesinin aracı olarak tutum ve değerler üzerinde önemle durmaktadır (MEB, 2018a). Ayrıca hayat bilgisi dersi çocuğun kendini tanımasını ve bilgilerini sistemleştirmesini sağlayarak yeni bilgi, beceri ve tutumlar kazanmasına zemin hazırlamaktadır (Akinoğlu, 2003). Tutumlar üzerinde duran bir diğer ders ise sosyal bilgiler dersidir. Sosyal bilgiler dersi, hayat bilgisi dersinin oluşturduğu bu zemini olumlu tutum ve davranış açısından geliştirmeye devam etmektedir. Her bireyin yaşamında farklı unsurlarla birlikte amaçları, değerleri, inançları, tutumları vardır (Sönmez, 2020). Sosyal bilgiler dersinde bireylerin tutum ve davranışlarını analiz ederek kendi tutum ve davranışlarını sorgulaması amaçlanmaktadır (MEB, 2018b). Öğrencilerin günlük yaşamdaki sorunlarla başa çıkması, eleştirel düşünebilmesi, demokratik, çağdaş bir yaşam anlayışıyla iyi vatandaşlığı kazanabilmesi için bilgi işleme süreç basamaklarının iyi nitelikte özümsemesi gerekmektedir. Bu özümsemenin gerçekleşebilmesi için iyi bir motivasyona, motivasyon için ise öğrencilerin olumlu tutum geliştirilmesi gerekmektedir. Covid-19 Çin'de ortaya çıkarak tüm dünyayı etkisi altına aldı. Ülkeler Covid-19'un yayılmasını önlemek için çeşitli önlemler almaya başladı (Tarkar, 2020). Ulusal eğitim sistemlerinin karşılaştığı en büyük zorluk haline gelen Covid-19'a karşı birçok hükümet, öğrencilerinin çoğu için yüz yüze eğitimi durdurarak çevrimiçi öğretime ve sanal eğitime geçmeyi kararlaştırdı (Daniel, 2020). Türkiye de salgının yayılmasını önlemek için yüz yüze eğitime ara vererek uzaktan eğitime geçmeye başladı. Bu süreçle beraber derslerin işlenişinden öğretmen öğrenci etkileşimine kadar birçok değişim ortaya çıktı (Kırmızıgül, 2020). Milli Eğitim Bakanlığı (MEB), dijital eğitim portalı Eğitim Bilişim Ağı'nın (EBA) alt yapısını güçlendirdi ve Türkiye Radyo ve Televizyon (TRT) ile işbirliği yaparak sanal eğitim ortamını oluşturdu (Özer, 2020). Alınan bütün önlemlere ve alandaki yönetici, öğretmen ve veli çabalarına rağmen Covid-19'un kısa ve uzun vadede birçok soruna yol açtığı tespit edilmiştir (Çakın, ve Külekçi Akyavuz, 2020). Ancak pandemi sürecinin olumsuz sonuçlarının belirlenmesine rağmen öğrencilerin derslere özellikle de hayat bilgisi ve sosyal bilgiler derslerine yönelik tutumlarında nasıl bir değişimin gerçekleştiğinin incelenmediği görülmektedir. Pandemi dönemi ile birlikte öğrencilerin eğitim hayatında önemli bir değişim gerçekleşmiştir. İki yıllık pandemi sürecinde okulların kapatılmasının, yüze eğitimin askıya alınmasının, öğrencilerin uzaktan eğitim ile öğrenimlerine devam etmesinin ve bu süreçte bazı öğrencilerin eğitimden uzak kalmasının öğrenci tutumlarını etkilemiş olabileceği varsayılmıştır. Bu çerçevede öğrencilerin hayat bilgisi ve sosyal bilgiler derslerine yönelik tutumları incelenmiştir. Tutumlar incelenirken pandemi sürecine uygun olacak ve öğrenci tutumlarını doğrudan etkileyebilecek değişkenler belirlenmiştir. Pandemi sürecindeki öğrenci tutumları ile pandemi öncesi tutumlar arasındaki farklılıkların ortaya konulacak olması çalışmayı özgün kılmaktadır. Bu çalışmada hayat bilgisi ve sosyal bilgiler derslerine yönelik öğrenci tutumlarının ayrı ölçeklerle incelenecek ve bir bütün olarak aynı çerçevede ele alınmasının alanyazına katkı sağlayacağı beklenmektedir. Bu açıklamalar ışığında araştırmada pandemi döneminde, ilkökul öğrencilerinin farklı değişkenlere göre

hayat bilgisi ve sosyal bilgiler derslerine yönelik tutumlarının incelenmesi amaçlanmıştır. Cinsiyete göre öğrencilerin hayat bilgisi ve sosyal bilgiler derslerine yönelik tutum puanlarının t-Testi sonuçlarının her iki sınıf düzeyinde de istatistiksel olarak manidar düzeyde farklılaştığı tespit edilmiştir. Üçüncü sınıfların etki büyüklüğünün dördüncü sınıflara göre daha büyük olduğu belirlenmiştir. Cinsiyete göre değerlendirildiğinde erkek öğrencilerin kız öğrencilere göre her iki derste de daha olumlu tutum sergiledikleri görülmektedir. Alanyazındaki sonuçlar incelendiğinde genel olarak kız çocuklarının bu derslere yönelik tutumlarının erkeklere göre daha olumlu olduğu görülmektedir. Bu araştırmada ise erkek öğrencilerin tutumlarının daha olumlu olduğu ortaya çıkmıştır. Öğrencilerin çalışma odalarının olup olmamasına göre derse yönelik tutumlarının dördüncü sınıfta istatistiksel olarak manidar düzeyde farklılaştığı; üçüncü sınıfta ise farklılaşmadığı belirlenmiştir. Dördüncü sınıfta çalışma odası olmayan öğrencilerin, sosyal bilgiler dersine yönelik tutumunun daha olumlu olduğu tespit edilmiştir. Çalışmayı destekler nitelikte Şimşek ve Demir (2012) ile Uzun (2006) tarafından yapılan araştırmalarda sosyo-ekonomik durumları düşük olan öğrencilerin sosyal bilgiler dersine yönelik tutumlarının daha olumlu olduğu belirlenmiştir. Yılmaz ve Beşir Demir (2014) tarafından yapılan araştırmada ise çalışma odası olan öğrencilerin sosyal bilgiler dersine yönelik tutumlarının daha olumlu olduğu belirtilmiştir. Öğrencilerin ders dışı internette geçirdikleri süreler açısından hayat bilgisi ve sosyal bilgiler derslerine yönelik tutumları incelendiğinde iki sınıf düzeyinde de bir-iki saat ile iki saat ve üstü internette süre geçiren öğrencilerin; bir saate kadar süre geçiren öğrencilere göre tutumlarının daha olumlu olduğu belirlenmiştir. Yılmaz ve Beşir Demir (2014) tarafından yapılan araştırmada sosyal bilgiler dersine yönelik öğrenci tutumlarında süre açısından anlamlı bir fark bulunmamıştır. Bu çalışmada internette bir-dört saat zaman geçiren öğrencilerin, iki-üç saat zaman geçiren öğrencilere göre tutumlarının daha olumlu olduğu görülmektedir. Tutum ile ilgili yapılan incelemelerde, okul başarısı ile tutum arasında anlamlı bir ilişkinin olduğu tespit edilmiştir (Tay ve Tay, 2006). Arkadaş çevresinin olup olmamasına göre dördüncü sınıflarda öğrencilerin tutum ortalama puanları arasında anlamlı bir farklılığın olduğu belirlenmiştir. Buna göre arkadaş çevresi olmayan öğrencilerin, arkadaş çevresi olan öğrencilere göre tutumlarının daha olumlu olduğu belirlenmiştir. Ek olarak, öğrencilerin arkadaşlarıyla geçirdikleri süreye göre hayat bilgisi ve sosyal bilgiler derslerine yönelik tutumları incelendiğinde dördüncü sınıfta istatistiksel olarak manidar düzeyde farklılığın olduğu belirlenmiştir. Üçüncü sınıfta ise anlamlı bir farklılık olmamakla beraber her iki sınıf düzeyinde de arkadaşlarıyla geçirdikleri süre ile bu derslere yönelik tutum puanları arasında doğrusal bir paralelliğin olduğu görülmektedir. Öğrencilerin tutumları farklı değişkenlere göre HBDYTÖ ve SBDYTÖ yönelik tutumları incelenmiştir. Öğrencilerin toplam tutum puanlarının ortalaması dikkate alındığında hem hayat bilgisi hem de sosyal bilgiler derslerine yönelik tutumlarının genel olarak olumsuz (düşük) olduğu belirlenmiştir. Öğrenci tutumlarının gelişiminde etkili olan faktörlerden biri de öğretmendir. Öğrenciye her yönüyle rehberdir. Öğretmen öğrenci ilişkisinin pandemi nedeniyle sekteye uğramış ve bunun öğrenci tutumlarını olumsuz etkilemiş olabileceği düşünülmektedir. Öğrenci tutumlarının araştırıldığı bir çalışmada, öğrencilerin diğer derslere göre sosyal bilgiler derslerine yönelik tutumlarının düşük olduğunu belirlenmiştir (Haladyna ve Thomas, 1979). Zoe ve Hoge (2005) tarafından yapılan araştırmada bu araştırmayı destekler nitelikte öğrencilerin sosyal bilgiler dersine yönelik tutumlarının olumsuz olduğunu, öğrencilerin genellikle matematik ve fen bilimleri gibi derslere karşı olumlu tutum sergilediklerini ve bu dersleri genel olarak eğlenceli, faydalı ve zorlu gördüklerini; sosyal bilgiler dersini ise sıkıcı ve kullanışsız olarak nitelendirdiklerini belirtmişlerdir. Governale (1997), sosyal bilgiler konularını en az seven öğrencilerle ilgili yaptığı araştırmada öğrencilerin, bu dersi ilginç ya da zor bulmamalarını gerekçe olarak gösterdiklerini tespit etmiştir. Öğrencilerin sosyal bilgiler tutumunu geliştirmede önemli bir faktör öğretmenin öğretme tarzı yani, öğrencilere nasıl davrandığıdır. Bu tarz ise güven, çeşitlilik, coşku, adalet, formalite, hedef yönü, övgü ve pekiştirme, öğrencinin öğrenmesine bağlılık ve bireye destektir (McGowan, Sutton ve Smith, 1990). Öğrenmede ciddi sorunlar yaşayan öğrenciler elde ettikleri deneyimlerin üstesinden kolayca gelemeyeceğinden, ilerleme gösterebilmeleri için öğretmenlerin çabası gereklidir (Savage, 2003). Derste öğretmen tutumlarının, öğrencilerin öğrenimi ile doğrudan bir ilişkisinin olduğu (James ve Marlin, 1991) ise belki de en önemli öğeyi oluşturmakla birlikte gerekli müdahalelerle öğrencilerin sosyal bilgiler dersine yönelik tutumları geliştirilebilir (Governale, 1997).

