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Examining Social Studies Education in the Context of Migration and Asylum: A Study Based on Teachers' Views

Hüseyin BAYRAM¹

¹Ağrı İbrahim Çeçen University, Ağrı, Turkey  0000-0001-6065-8865

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ABSTRACT

Migration and asylum are the subjects of social studies education since these concepts are social phenomena. In this respect, it is important that the content of the social studies course properly covers the subjects of migration and asylum, and the social studies education is carried out under this scope. This study aimed to examine social studies education in the context of the subjects of migration and asylum. For this purpose, the views of social studies teachers working in different cities of Turkey were consulted. The phenomenological design was used in this study, which is aimed at examining teachers' views. The maximum variation sampling method, one of the purposive sampling methods, was used to determine the study participants. A semi-structured interview form consisting of six questions was used to collect the data. The content analysis method was used to analyze the data. The results of the study show that teachers hold the following views: Social studies textbooks and curricula are not effective in teaching migration and asylum issues and need to be redesigned, social studies course plays an important role in teaching migration and asylum issues to students, and social studies is an important course in terms of social integration of asylum seeker students. Various suggestions were made to the researchers and the education institutions based on the findings of the study.

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Keywords:

Social studies education; migration; asylum; asylum seeker students.

1. Introduction

People must change places they live in from time to time depending on their living conditions. This change of place can be caused by natural conditions and the effects of the society in which one lives or external forces. The change of place in this context of people is called migration.

In its simplest definition, migration is the act of people changing places voluntarily or necessarily (Dingle & Drake, 2007). Migration is the population movement that people make to increase their comfort levels by changing their living spaces due to the natural, social, psychological, economic, or political problems they experience (Gmelch, 1980; Faist et al., 2013). Migration behavior is defined in different ways depending on the reasons for migration and the status of the migrant in the place of migration. According to international law, a migrant is categorized into three different statuses: immigrant, asylum seeker, and refugee (Valentine et al., 2009; Tinti & Reitano, 2018).

While the term immigrant is used for people who voluntarily leave their home country to live in another country for economic or cultural reasons (De Genova, 2002), the term refugee is used for people who must leave their own country for ethnic, religious, or political reasons (Phillips, 2013). In other words, while immigration is a voluntary act, taking refuge in another country is based on necessity. On the other hand,

¹ Corresponding author's address: Department of Social Studies Education, Faculty of Education, Ağrı İbrahim Çeçen University, Ağrı, Turkey.

e-mail: hucbayram@agri.edu.tr

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Asylum seeker is a term used for people who have applied for refugee status but have not yet gained it (Robinson & Segrot, 2002).

Throughout history, people have migrated to different places either to have better living standards or by force (Nail, 2020). This situation is still valid today (Stierl, 2019). So much so that the number of people migrating in the world between 2000-2020 has reached 281 million. This number corresponds to approximately 3.6 of the world's population (United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Issues, 2021). People immigrate to countries with higher economic and social welfare than their own countries (Klocker & Dunn, 2003). When considered in the Middle East, people fleeing the wars and other problems in the Middle East migrate to Asian, European, or African countries to have better living conditions, and Turkey is one of these countries (Ereş, 2015). Migrations to Turkey are mostly within the scope of asylum. According to the Red Crescent Directorate of Migration Services (2020) report, most of the asylum seeker population in Turkey is from Syria, but also Afghanistan, Iraq, Iran, and Somalia.

Migration and asylum are social issues (O'Reilly, 2012). Considering this fact, they should be considered when determining and designing variables in the field of education, as in many other fields (Bartlett et al., 2015). Education about social life is given to elementary and middle school students through social studies course (Turner et al., 2013) in countries such as Turkey, the USA, South Korea, Germany, and New Zealand (Öztürk & Deveci, 2016). Since education on migration and asylum issues is related to social life, it is carried out within the scope of social studies course at elementary and middle school levels in these countries. Depending on this situation, in countries where migration and asylum issues are on the agenda, the task of raising the awareness of elementary and middle school students on the issues as mentioned above falls to the social studies course. On the other hand, as a course aimed at raising citizens compatible with the society they live in, social studies has important duties in terms of integrating school-age refugee children into society. In this context, in Turkey, where migration and asylum issues are a part of social life, the subjects of migration and asylum should be given sufficient place in the content of the social studies course to raise the students' awareness. In addition, for the asylum seeker students to continue their lives as individuals who are compatible with society, the content of the course should be designed in a way that would achieve harmony between these students and the educational system.

The social studies curriculum and social studies coursebooks make up the foundations of the content of the social studies course. The current content on migration and asylum in the 2018 Social Studies Curriculum, which is still in effect, is limited to two learning outcomes in two learning domains of the seventh grade.

The learning domains and outcomes in question are as follows:

- In the learning domain of *"People, Places, and Environments"*, the learning outcome of *"Discuss the causes and consequences of migration through case studies"*,
- In the learning domain of *"Global Connections"*, the learning outcome of *"Develops ideas for the solution of global problems with his peers"* and this outcome's explanation *"Global climate change, natural disasters, hunger, terrorism, and migration will be dealt with."*

Considering the content of the 2018 Social Studies Curriculum on migration, it is seen that the program includes two learning outcomes related to teaching the subject of migration to the students, and it does not contain any information about ensuring the social cohesion of asylum seeker students.

In the 5th, 6th, and 7th grade social studies coursebooks, separate voluntary and forced migration units at every grade are included. The units that include the subject of migration in social studies coursebooks are shown in Table 1 (Pehlivan Yılmaz & Günel, 2021, p. 1734):

Table 1 shows that the subject of migration is included in the 5th, 6th, and 7th grade coursebooks. When the contents of the units in the table are examined, it is understood that there are texts on the types of migration, the causes of migration, examples of historical migration, population changes within the scope of migration, and the problems caused by migration. It is seen that the units do not include a detailed explanation of the current form of the phenomenon of migration and information on ensuring the social cohesion of asylum seeker students is missing. However, social studies, which is a course for teaching social issues, is expected to have complete content regarding situations affecting society, such as migration and asylum.

Table 1. Units on Migration in 5th, 6th, and 7th Grade Social Studies Coursebooks

Grades	Units	Themes
5	<i>Me in Society</i>	<i>Individual and Society</i>
	<i>My Country, My Culture and My History</i>	<i>Culture and Heritage</i>
	<i>The Place We Live</i>	<i>People, Places and Environments</i>
	<i>From Production to Consumption</i>	<i>Production, Distribution and Consumption</i>
6	<i>Journey to History</i>	<i>Culture and Heritage</i>
	<i>Life on Earth</i>	<i>People, Places and Environments</i>
7	In the books of this grade units are located with theme names	<i>Culture and Heritage</i>
		<i>People, Places, and Environments</i>
		<i>Production, Distribution and Consumption</i>
		<i>Global Connections</i>

Existing studies conducted on migration and asylum generally focus on the problems experienced by asylum seekers. It is noticed that there are many studies in the literature concerning the problems caused by immigration on health (Poole, et al., 2018; Richter, et al., 2018; Leiler, et al., 2019), education (Ablak, 2020; Antilla, et al., 2018; Öztürk, 2021), perceptions towards migration (Tıkman, et al., 2017) and economics (Almohamed & Vyas, 2019; Bansak, et al., 2017; Özensoy, 2021, Yağan & Akşit, 2021). A document review (Pehlivan Yılmaz & Günel, 2021) exists in the literature on examining social studies coursebooks and curriculum within the scope of migration and asylum. However, no study has been found that examines social studies education in the context of migration and asylum and consults teachers' views in this context. It is assumed that it causes a gap in the literature. This research was conducted with the aim of contributing to the literature to fill this gap. Due to the originality of this research, it is expected to be a guide for further studies and researchers.

This study aims to examine social studies education given in primary and secondary schools in the context of migration and asylum. The views of social studies teachers working in different cities of Turkey were consulted to fulfill this aim.

2. Methodology

Qualitative research methods are employed in this study, which is aimed at examining the views of social studies teachers. Qualitative research examines situations, events, or phenomena in their natural conditions (Denzin & Lincoln, 2018). The reason for using the qualitative research method in this study is to examine the views of the participants formed in the context of their lives, without any outside influence. The present study was conducted with the approval of the Scientific Research Ethics Committee of Ağrı İbrahim Çeçen University under the decision number E-95531838-050.99-31725.

2.1. Research Design

A phenomenological design was used in the study. The phenomenological design is used in studies that examine events, situations, perceptions, opinions, orientations, and behaviors based on human experiences (Creswell & Poth, 2018). The phenomenological design aims to reveal the perspectives and behaviors shaped by the people's experiences (Schwandt, 2014). The reason for using the phenomenological design in this study is to examine social studies education in the context of migration and asylum by getting teachers' views. To control the harmony between the variables of the research, the research compliance matrix (Kaya & Bayram, 2021) was used.

2.2. Research Sample

The maximum variation sampling method, one of the purposive sampling methods, was used to determine the participants of the study. Maximum variation sampling is aimed at forming the participant group in qualitative research in a way that will provide maximum data diversity regarding the research questions (Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2018). Social studies teachers working in Istanbul, Gaziantep, Hatay, Şanlıurfa, Adana, and Mersin where the most refugees live participated in the study. The participants were selected from these cities to ensure maximum diversity in the data collection process. The names of the participants and the schools they work in are not given due to ethical considerations. In this context, each participant took part in the research with their chosen nickname. Information about the participants is shown in Table 2:

Table 2. *Participant Information*

	Istanbul	Gaziantep	Hatay	Şanlıurfa	Adana	Mersin
Nickname	Su	Hale	Cemile	Meliha	Kaya	Elvira
	Füsün	Ertuğrul	Emre	Meltem	Sinan	Ediz
	Hakan	Aşım	Can			
	Ahmet	Eyüp				
	Evliya					
Total	5	4	3	2	2	2
Total						18

As seen in Table 2, 18 teachers participated in the study, five teachers work in Istanbul, four work in Gaziantep, three teachers work in Hatay, two teachers work in Şanlıurfa, two teachers work in Adana, and two teachers work in Mersin. Seven of the participants were female, and 11 were male.

2.3. Data Collection

A semi-structured interview form developed by the researcher was used to collect data. The form was designed to contain nine questions at the first stage. The form was then presented to three experts, two associate professors and one assistant professor, who are competent in qualitative research. Following expert feedback, all questions on the form were redesigned and the number of questions was reduced to six. After revision, the questions were submitted to two assistant professors who had previously conducted qualitative research. No corrections were received at this stage. Prior to data collection, a pilot was conducted with the interview form to check the comprehensibility of the questions in the form. The piloting application was conducted with two social studies teachers working in Şanlıurfa, and it was understood that the questions were suitable for the research and were clearly understood. After obtaining expert opinions in two rounds and based on the results of the pilot phase, it was decided that the interview questionnaire was suitable for data collection. The data were collected by using the teleconference method. A date was set for the interviews for each of the participants, and data were collected using the questions in the interview form. The interviews were electronically recorded with the consent of the participants. The recordings were then converted to normal text and archived.

2.4. Data Analysis

Content analysis was used to analyze the data. Content analysis is an analysis method that aims to reach conceptual and relational structures for the research question from the created data set (Creswell & Poth, 2018). Content analysis corresponds to a process that includes four stages (Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2018). The stages of content analysis applied in this research and the scope of the stages are stated below:

Coding of the data: Firstly, the data set was read superficially. After becoming familiar with the data, the second and third readings were performed in an attempt to master the semantic integrity of the data set. The first coding was done after the third reading. Next, the data was read again, and the coding process was repeated. Then, simplifications and additions were made by comparing the first coding with the second coding. In addition, one-fifth of the data set and the generated codes were sent to another researcher who is an expert in qualitative analysis, and his opinions were taken on the way followed in coding. The final codes were determined based on the researcher's first and second coding comparison and the expert opinion received.

Finding themes: Themes and sub-themes were created within the codes' scope. At this stage, six themes and 13 sub-themes were created. Some of these were later merged or deleted.

Arrangement of codes and themes: Themes and sub-themes were submitted to expert opinion, with the concern that there was no order in the created themes and sub-themes. Based on the feedback received from the experts, it was decided that five themes would be created without sub-themes.

Description and interpretation of the findings: At the end of the analysis process, the findings were interpreted and reported.

3. Validity and Reliability

Various procedures were applied to ensure the validity and reliability of the research. These procedures are as follows:

- The data collection tool was designed by referring to the opinions of four different experts who are competent in qualitative research.
- A pilot study was carried out before the data collection process to confirm the suitability of the data collection tool.
- The collected data were filed by sticking to their original form.
- One-fifth of the codes and data set created during the data coding process were presented to the expert's opinion, and opinions were received on the appropriateness of the coding.

4. Findings

The results of the study were combined and interpreted under five themes. Direct quotations were used to support the results, and the relationship between the codes and the themes was visualized. The themes are shown in Figure 1.

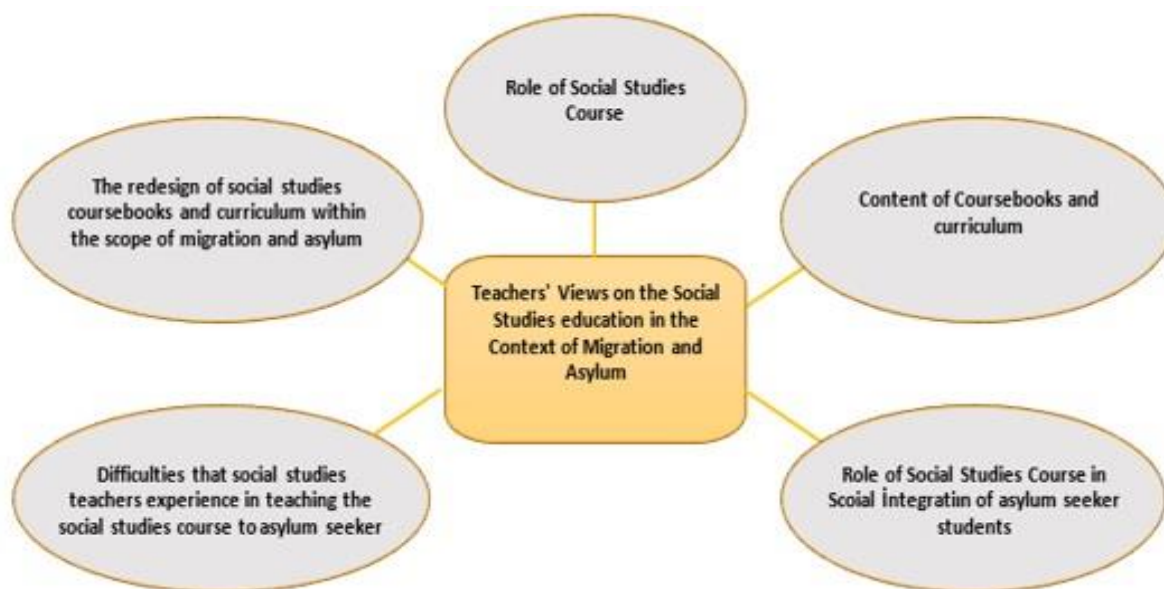


Figure 1. Teachers' Views on the Social Studies Education in the Context of Migration and Asylum

Figure 1 shows that five themes were created under the findings title. The themes are expanded and expressed in the following sections.

4.1. Teachers' Views on the Role of Social Studies Course in Teaching Students about Migration and Asylum

It was found that the teachers considered the social studies course as an important course in teaching migration and asylum issues. So much so that most of the teachers stated that the social studies course is the main course for teaching these issues to students. One teacher noted that migration and asylum issues could be taught within the scope of all courses. The findings reached in this context are shown in Figure 2.

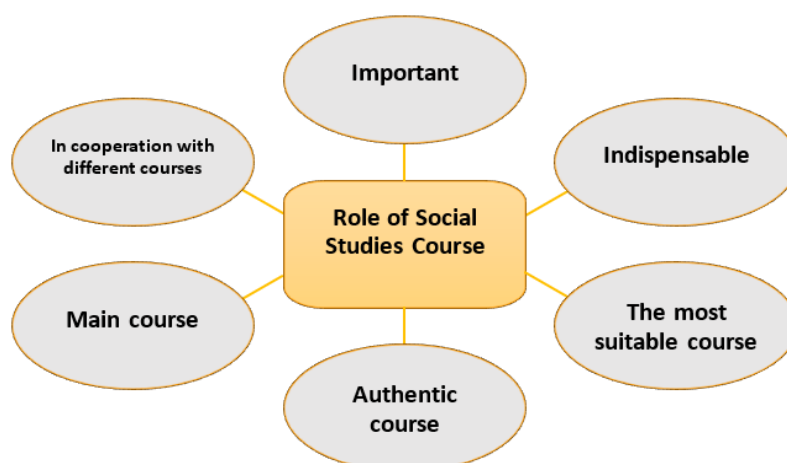


Figure 2. Teachers' Views on the Role of Social Studies Course in Teaching Students about Migration and Asylum

Figure 2 shows six codes under the theme of teachers' views on the role of social studies course in teaching students about migration and asylum. As can be understood from the findings shown in Figure 2, teachers considered the role of social studies course in this context as an important, indispensable, most suitable course, authentic course, main course, and a course that is in cooperation with different courses. The most interesting statements that form the basis of the findings are as follows:

Most of the participants stated that migration and asylum are the subjects that can be taught through the social studies course. For example, Meliha, who works in Şanlıurfa, stated, "The concepts of both migration and asylum are social issues. We teach social events to children with social studies. Looking at the issue from this angle, subjects of migration and asylum are indispensable for the social studies course." She indicated that these subjects can be taught to middle school students through social studies course. She made her point of view clearer by stating: "The purpose of social studies is already clear: to teach social life. Migration and asylum are directly related to social life." Another participant who used striking expressions was Su, who works in Istanbul. Su expressed her point of view to the question posed to her during the interview, with the definitive statement, "Of course, we can say that the social studies course is the only course for this subject." Continuing her words with the question, "Imagine, for example, with what course can we teach children of this age (middle school) about the Syrian or Afghan refugees or the subject of other asylum seekers, apart from social studies?" Su answered this question by saying "We always say that it is everyday knowledge etc. We always teach everyday knowledge with social studies course. The issue of migration is also in our daily lives. Therefore, the social studies course is the most appropriate course to teach these subjects." A similar view came from a participant named Can, who is working as a teacher in Hatay. Can emphasized the scope of social studies by stating, "Now, the purpose of this course (social studies) is clear, its goal is clear, its intention is clear... We do not teach mathematics or science to children. We teach children the knowledge of social sciences." Continuing his words, Can made clear that migration and asylum issues are within the scope of social studies, "The issue of immigrants concerns the economy. It concerns geography. It concerns anthropology. That is, it concerns social sciences. Shall we teach social sciences with mathematics or with science? We cannot teach. Naturally, we can teach it with social studies." Another participant who made remarkable statements was Evliya, who works in Istanbul. Evliya made comprehensive statements on the subject. Evliya's view on this issue is as follows:

"Sir, I think this issue is clear. So of course, there is some speculation from time to time. It also happens in MoNE (Ministry of National Education) schools. It also happens among academics. Therefore, it is necessary to clarify this issue for everyone. Let's look at the root of the matter. Now, immigrants from other countries are coming to Turkey. A different language, a different culture, or even a different belief. Now, when we look at it, language, culture, etc. These are issues of anthropology. These are the subjects of social studies course. Okay, maybe in other courses, teachers will touch on these issues personally, but the subject is social studies."

Eyüp, one of the participants, stated that migration and asylum are the common subject of all courses and cannot be reduced to a single course. Eyüp, who continues his teaching career in Gaziantep, explained the nature of the issue in the city where he works, "The number of immigrants is high in Antep. You would know this too. You can see immigrant children in almost every school. Antep has become a very colorful place." Then he said: "In my opinion, this subject is not the responsibility of a single course. It is the responsibility of every course. In other words, I see that the information in all our books (books of different courses) is foreign to the asylum seeker students." He

explained his point of view in a more detailed way by stating, *“I don’t know mathematics (mathematics course), but when I talk to the teachers of other courses, they all say that the content is strange for asylum seeker students. That’s why I can’t say that this is the responsibility of only the social studies course. Social studies course would be in cooperation with different courses.”*

4.2. Teachers' Views on the Content on Migration and Asylum in Social Studies Coursebooks and Curriculum

It has been determined that some of the participants believe that the content on migration and asylum in the social studies coursebooks and curriculum is insufficient. On the other hand, some participants found the books' content sufficient and the curriculum's content insufficient. A few participants found the content in both the books and the curriculum sufficient. One participant found the content in the books insufficient and did not know the content of the curriculum. The findings are shown in Figure 3:

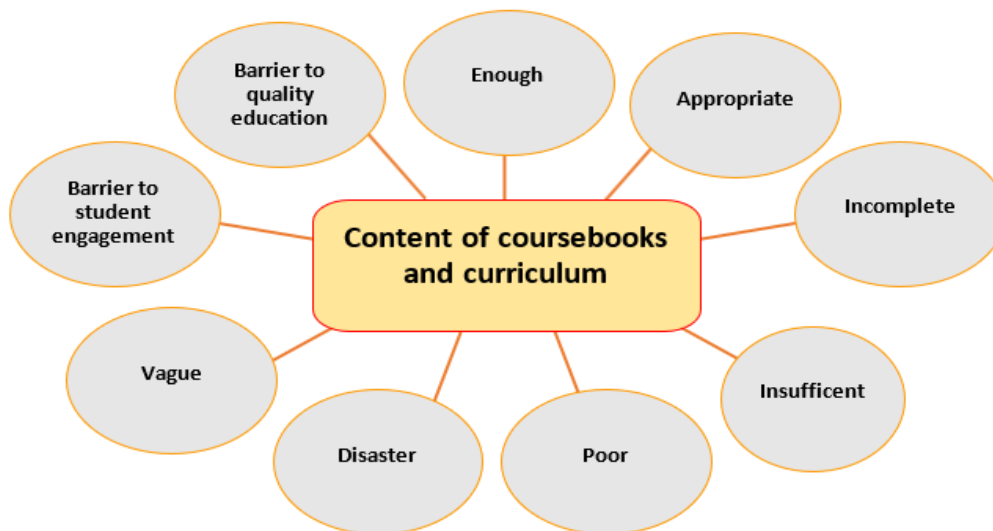


Figure 3. Teachers' Views on the Content of Migration and Asylum in Social Studies Coursebooks and Curriculum

As shown in Figure 3, the theme of teachers' views on the content of migration and asylum in social studies coursebooks and curriculum includes nine codes. The teachers view the content on migration and asylum in coursebooks and curriculum as incomplete, sufficient, insufficient, poor, disaster, appropriate, vague, barrier to student engagement and barrier to quality education. Some of the statements that provide the findings are as follows:

Some participants believe that there is not enough content on migration and asylum in the social studies coursebooks and curriculum. One of these participants is Elvira, who works in Mersin. Elvira thinks that the curriculum is insufficient in terms of migration and asylum, *“Although the social studies curriculum was prepared in 2018, there are only one or two learning outcomes in the curriculum on the subject of migration. However, immigration to Turkey had started much earlier.”* She also thinks that the coursebooks are insufficient in teaching these subjects to students. They become a barrier to quality education: *“There is not enough information about immigration, refugees, or asylum co in the coursebooks. I think the books and the curriculum are not enough. Because this issue (the issue of immigration and asylum) is an important thing. However, we cannot teach these subjects properly because the books are not good.”* A similar view was expressed by Hale, who works in Gaziantep. She said: *“I think neither the book nor the program is well prepared on these issues. Immigration and immigrants are mentioned only in a few places, which is scarce. In this way, children do not understand the reasons for migration, and they cannot mix with immigrant (asylum seeker) children.”*

A few participants stated that they considered the social studies coursebooks sufficient and the curriculum insufficient on migration and asylum issues. One of the participants who made remarkable statements on the subject was Ahmet from Istanbul. Ahmet expressed his views in this context, *“Actually, the books are good. The subject is covered in the books. But the program is very inadequate in this regard. The issue of immigration is clearly overlooked. It is only mentioned in one or two places in the program. It takes place in the program as something vague.”*

Another participant, Kaya, used similar expressions. He said, *"I can't complain about the books. They meet our needs in this regard. But the curriculum is a disaster. Although we do not have much to do with the curriculum, the learning outcomes come from it. There are not enough learning outcomes in the curriculum. The curriculum is poor."*

Some participants stated that they found the social studies coursebooks and curriculum sufficient on migration and asylum issues. For example, Asım, who works as a teacher in Gaziantep, said, *"Well, I think our books are good. The curriculum is also good. The outcomes are also sufficient."*

Ediz, a teacher who works in Mersin stated that he did not have information about the curriculum but that he found the social studies coursebooks insufficient on immigration and asylum issues. He indicated that he does not have information about the social studies curriculum by stating, *"To be honest, I am not familiar with the program. I can't say anything."* He also expressed the insufficient side of the coursebooks on the subjects by stating, *"But I know the books. We always use them in classrooms. The books are a bit insufficient on these subjects."*

4.3. Teachers' Views on the Role of Social Studies Course in Social Integration of Asylum Seeker Students

Most of the participants considered social studies as a basic course in the integration of asylum seeker students into society. One of the participants saw the Turkish course as effective in this regard and the social studies course. The results obtained were presented in Figure 4:

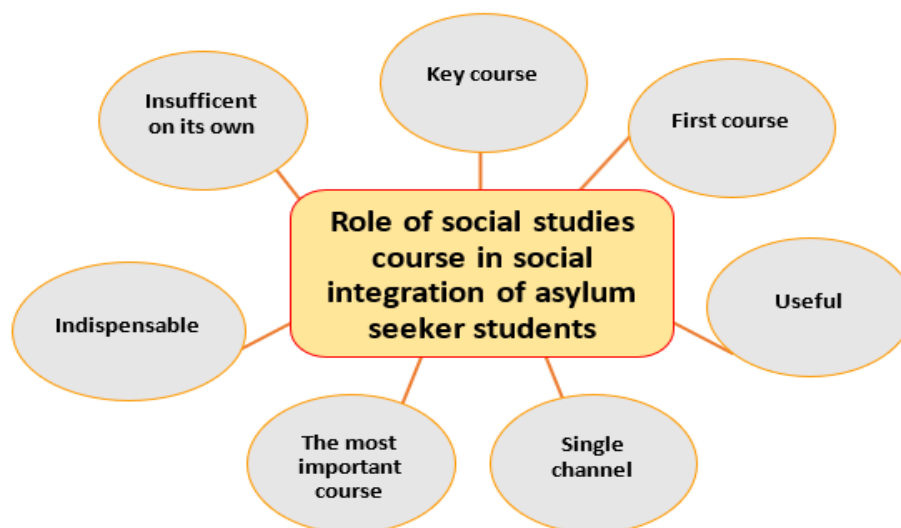


Figure 4. Teachers' Views on the Role of Social Studies Course in Social Integration of Asylum Seeker Students

Teachers considered the role of social studies course in the integration of asylum seeker students as a key course, first course, useful, single channel, most important course, indispensable, and insufficient on its own. As seen in Figure 4, there were seven codes under the theme of the role of social studies course in social integration of asylum seeker students. The most striking expressions of the teachers, which form the basis of the findings, were as follows:

Expressing that social studies course includes information about the science disciplines used in the integration of asylum seeker students, Füsün, a teacher in Istanbul, said, *"These children (asylum seeker students) will adapt to society by learning history, geography, sociology, and law. Social studies teachers give this information in middle school. Because social studies course includes these fields."* She drew attention to the importance of social studies in the relevant subject by saying, *"The better the social studies course is taught, the easier the adaptation of asylum seeker children will be. It is the key course in this subject."* Another teacher, Sinan, who was working in Adana emphasized the purpose of social studies by saying, *"This course (social studies) talks about life. It gives information about life. It teaches life to everyone in the class. No matter if they are natives or asylum seekers... Everyone in the class learns about life thanks to this course."* Besides, he expressed his views on the role of social studies course in the integration of asylum seeker students by voicing, *"Integrating them into life is possible with a social studies course. This course is an indispensable thing for this aim."* Another participant, Meltem, who was working as a teacher in Şanlıurfa, expressed her opinion on the subject with the following striking statements:

"When we were at university, we learned about social studies goals. Almost all goals were about preparing students for life. We also participated in in-service trainings and seminars. In these programs, it is also stated that

the goal of social studies is to teach life. Such a course whose aim is clearly life is undoubtedly the first course regarding integration. Other courses teach life, but the only goal of social studies is life. Therefore, social studies course is useful for integrating children (asylum seeker students)."

Emre, who used expressions close to Meltem's, stated the purpose of social studies in providing integration: "Our course (social studies) is already prepared for integration. This course is the only channel to ensure the integration of asylum seekers." Besides, he mentioned the role of social studies course in ensuring the integration of asylum seeker students with the following sentence: "Social studies aim to raise active citizens. A course to raise citizens is the most important course that will ensure integration." Ediz, one of the participants, said that the Turkish course was also effective in the integration of asylum seeker students. He said, "However, applying only social studies course will be powerless in providing integration. Turkish course is also important. Children are taught Turkish values and Turkish in Turkish course. That's why I think it is effective in two courses."

4.4. Difficulties that Social Studies Teachers Experience in Teaching the Social Studies Course to Asylum Seeker Students

All social studies teachers stated that they experienced various difficulties while teaching social studies to the asylum seeker students. The difficulties experienced by the teachers were language, culture, writing, use of technology, in-class harmony, measurement-evaluation, and homework. These findings are given in Figure 5:

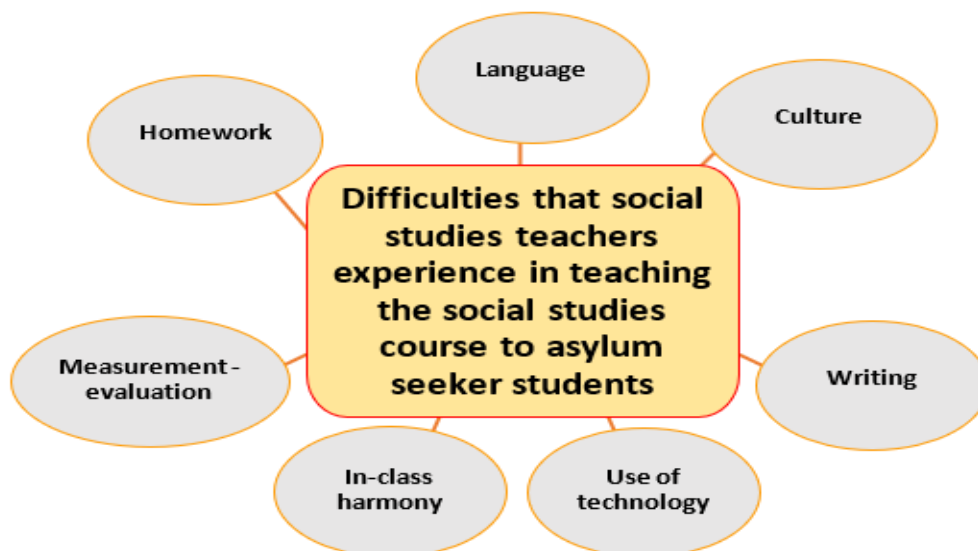


Figure 5. Difficulties that Social Studies Teachers Experience in Teaching the Social Studies Course to Asylum Seeker Students

As seen in Figure 5, there are seven codes under the theme of the difficulties that social studies teachers experience in teaching social studies course to asylum seeker students. These codes were language, culture, writing, use of technology, in-class harmony, measurement-evaluation, and homework. Some representative statements were as follows:

Some participants stated that they had difficulties with language. Hakan, who was working in Istanbul, said, "We have troubles. The child grew up with another language. The pronunciation is different, and the logic of the language is different. There are many metaphors in our language. The child does not understand them. Whatever needs to be said must be said directly. This makes us tired." Another participant, Ertuğrul, expressed a similar view on the subject. Ertuğrul, a teacher in Gaziantep, said, "All of the foreigners (asylum seeker students) in our school are immigrants from Syria. They think in Arabic and speak Arabic. Turkish and Arabic are different from each other. That's why we can't convey the required message to children. There is a problem." Sinan, who was working in Adana, said, "The biggest issue is the language. First, we do not get along well with children (asylum seeker students). We must make additional explanations so that they could understand what we mean. Thus, it becomes a tiring job."

A few participants stated that they had difficulties due to cultural differences. For example, Cemile, who was working in Hatay, used the following sentences:

“Children of these families (asylum seeker students) come from another culture. I pay much attention. Their behaviors are different from those of the local children. Even their clothing is different. A boy once came to class in a long dress. The other children were very strange. This is not something to be confused about, of course. It's a culture issue, but the difference is immediately apparent. Also, the way they speak is different. They don't talk much, though. They are shy, but they connect the subject to other topics than the course when they talk. That's why I'm struggling. It seems as if there were two separate classes within one class. It's like I'm running two separate classrooms at the same time. This makes me tired. It also tires my other colleagues. They are constantly complaining about the same situation.”

Elvira, a teacher working in Mersin, expressed that the asylum seeker students had difficulties based on their culture. Elvira said, *“The asylum seeker students come from different countries. Every country has its own culture. They created another culture here and keep that culture alive. I honestly don't know much about that culture. I'm having trouble because I don't know. I cannot predict how to communicate with the child.”* Su, a teacher working in Istanbul, described her difficulties with the following statements:

“Sir, there is clearly a cultural difference. That's why quality education is not possible. Because students (asylum seeker students) think differently. For example, we talked about democracy in the social studies class, but they didn't learn it. They don't know what it means; thus, they don't understand the topic. It is necessary to describe it to the children in detail. Let me give another example. You are talking to the child about Atatürk's Principles and Revolutions. The child just stares. You are talking about Atatürk, but the child does not understand anything. The child had never heard of Atatürk before. As a result, a lot of energy needs to be spent on these children. It is a very, very difficult job.”

Two teachers stated that they had difficulties getting asylum seeker children to write. One of these teachers was Meltem, who worked in Şanlıurfa. She explained that the asylum seeker students could not write with the Turkish alphabet and that the teacher had difficulties in this regard, saying, *“I have the students take notes in class, but these children have difficulty writing with Latin letters. Sometimes it takes them 10 minutes to write a paragraph. That's why you need to take special care of them. This means spending extra time.”* Another participant, Kaya, who was working in Adana, stated that he had difficulties with the writing of the asylum seeker students. He expressed his difficulties with the following sentences: *“Asylum seeker students, you know, are used to the Arabic Alphabet. The child does not know which way to tilt his head when writing in Latin Alphabet. I must spend effort on children about writing in every lesson.”*

A few participants said that asylum seeker students were inadequate in using technology, which was a challenge for teachers. For example, Füsün, a teacher in Istanbul, said, *“As far as I understand, these children (asylum students) were not very familiar with technological devices in their own country. We are using smart boards here. We use projections. The boy is surprised. He thinks he is watching TV. It takes a long time until the child's amazement goes away.”* A similar view came from the teacher Evliya, who, like Füsün, was working in Istanbul. Evliya emphasized that he faced difficulties in directing asylum seeker students to benefit from technology by saying, *“Many students have tablets. There are also asylum seeker students, but they do not know how to use tablets. Now, they have learned a little, but they bothered me a lot at first. It's not uncommon for them. That's why they can't use technology in accordance with the course.”*

Some of the participants stated that they had difficulties in ensuring the harmony of the asylum seeker students in the classroom. One of the participants was Meliha, who was working in Şanlıurfa. Meliha stated:

“When migration first started, we suffered a lot. We suddenly found children (asylum seeker students) from other countries in the classroom. Many things were different. They had a different mindset than other children.

Therefore, there were often problems in the classroom. They could not get along with other children for a long time. They formed a group among themselves. In other words, I can say that asylum seeker children and other children were sitting in separate rows in the classroom. There were fights during recesses. We always had to intervene in their fights. This was of course due to the differences. I was having a hard time keeping harmony in the classroom. I'm still struggling. Because one class finishes, and a new class starts. There are new students in the new classroom. It always goes on like this."

Another participant emphasizing the difficulties in ensuring harmony in the classroom was Ediz. He said, "It is very difficult to adapt asylum seeker students to the classroom. They group among themselves. We do our best though. We succeed a little bit, but it takes more effort."

A few participants stated that they had difficulties when measuring and evaluating asylum seeker children. For example, Asim, who was working in Gaziantep, expressed the reasons for having difficulties evaluating asylum seeker children by saying, "These students (asylum seeker students) do not know Turkish. They do not fully understand what they are reading. As clearly as Turkish children, they do not understand what we are saying in the classroom." He added, "I'm confused about how to measure and evaluate these students. Shall I tolerate them or not? I don't know if it would be unfair to other children if I showed tolerance towards asylum seeker students."

Similarly, Ertuğrul, who was working in Gaziantep, underlined the prerequisites for proper measurement and evaluation by voice, "Now, we must speak frankly. To make a fair grading, all of the students must have equal conditions." He talked about the difficulties he experienced in measurement and evaluation: "I mean, at least all of the students should understand what you are saying so that they know exactly what to do. Thus, you can judge accordingly. When the students are not equal, it is not possible to make the grading correctly. This is a problem."

Some teachers stated that they faced difficulties with homework. For example, Emre, a teacher in Hatay, stated, "Can you believe that children (asylum seeker students) don't know how to do their homework? Maybe they don't understand me well enough. But in the end, it is almost impossible to get the homework done right." Similarly, Hale, a teacher in Gaziantep, said, "I can't make students (asylum seeker students) do their homework. Even they do their homework, I realized that they did not understand me. For example, I tell them to do homework on A, and they do homework on B."

4.5. Teachers' Views on the Redesign of Social Studies Coursebooks and Curriculum within the Scope of Migration and Asylum

Most of the social studies teachers thought that social studies coursebooks and curriculum should be redesigned within the scope of migration and asylum issues. Some of the teachers believed that a new design was not needed. Two teachers did not express any views on this issue. The findings were shown in Figure 6:

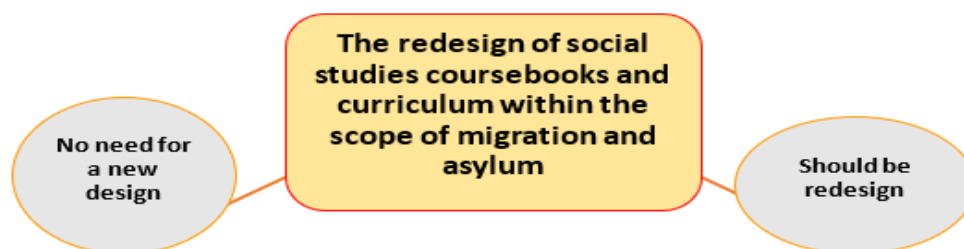


Figure 6. Teachers' Views on the Redesign of Social Studies Coursebooks and Curriculum within the Scope of Migration and Asylum

Regarding Figure 6, there are two codes under the theme of redesigning social studies coursebooks and curriculum within the scope of migration and asylum. While some teachers thought that the curriculum and coursebooks should be redesigned, others considered that there was no need for a new design. Some of the statements were as follows:

Most of the participants stated that the content of the social studies coursebooks and curriculum was insufficient within the scope of migration and asylum and should be revised. For example, Ahmet, who was working in Istanbul, used the following statements:

“Books on this subject (migration and asylum) need to be reconsidered because these topics are not explained enough in the books. Some additions need to be made. These topics need to be prepared by considering foreign students (asylum seeker students). In other words, I think that books should be re-created to explain migration to Turkish students, and to introduce Turkey to other students. Also, the curriculum should be revised accordingly. Because the curriculum has little information about this topic. It doesn't meet any needs. If we want to reach the goal of social studies, this issue definitely needs to be rethought.”

Can, who was working in Hatay, used similar statements. He mentioned the inadequacy of social studies books on migration and asylum and the need to be redesigned: “The books we have are not suitable for these subjects. I'm teaching to the fifth grade. I know the books of all grades. None of them is appropriate. If they were appropriate, we wouldn't have a problem. The content on migration needs to be expanded. It should be expanded so that the objectives can be achieved.” He also stated that the curriculum should be revised within the scope of migration and asylum issues: *“I think it is necessary to reshape the curriculum. The program almost did not consider these issues (migration and asylum). It would be great if it was reshaped.”*

Some participants stated that there was no need to change the social studies coursebooks or the curriculum. Eyüp, who was working in Gaziantep, said, *“I think there is no need to change the books or the curriculum. It depends on the teacher and the families. If teachers and immigrant families keep things tight, there is no need for anything else.”* Sinan, who was working in Adana, said, *“For me, both the books and the curriculum are sufficient. Goals are clearly explained in the curriculum. Books are prepared accordingly. I think there is no need for any additions or subtractions.”* Two teachers (Kaya and Ediz) stated that they did not have any idea about this issue.

Many social studies teachers believed that social studies course had an important role in teaching students about migration and asylum. Teachers also thought that the social studies course was the most important course in the social integration of the asylum seeker students. On the other hand, teachers voiced that the content on migration and asylum in social studies coursebooks and curriculum was insufficient. The study reported that the teachers encountered various difficulties while teaching the social studies to the asylum seeker students. Also, it was found that most of the teachers believed social studies coursebooks and curriculum should be reformed within the scope of migration and asylum issues.

5. Conclusion, Discussion and Recommendations

Teachers consider social studies as an important course in teaching migration and asylum issues. This confirms various studies. For example, Olkonomidoy and Gwendolyn (2010) advocate that the social studies course is effective for students and their parents to understand the issue of immigration and immigration. They state that the social studies course helps immigrants understand the difficulties they experienced. Elbih et al. (2020) report similar results. They insist that the social studies course is important in terms of understanding refugee issues. Referring to the opinions of social studies teachers and teachers of different fields, Mendenhall et al. (2015) stated social studies as one of the most effective courses for understanding refugees. In their study in which they investigated the ways of providing quality education to refugees in Kenya, Mendenhall et al. (2015) also examined effective methods and techniques to understand refugees. Christie and Sidhu (2006) determined that education is important for the adaptation of asylum seekers.

Teachers in this study consider social studies textbooks and curricula inadequate regarding migration and asylum issues. Pehlivan Yılmaz and Guenel (2021) emphasize similar findings in their document review. They share that the phenomenon of migration is not sufficiently addressed in textbooks and curricula. Monreal and McCorkle (2021), who studied social studies teachers' attitudes and beliefs about migration and the social studies curriculum, advocate enriching the content of social studies textbooks. Kotowski (2021), who examined the topic of immigration in the context of German and U.S. social studies textbooks, also warns that the books in both countries on this topic are inadequate. Bersh (2013) examined the topic of migration in books and found that social studies textbooks are inadequate on the topic of immigration, as are books from many fields. Many participants considered social studies as the main course in integrating asylum seeker students into society. This confirms various studies. For example, examining the perspectives of social studies teachers regarding

the restrictions applied in the classrooms where asylum seeker students were included during the Covid-19 outbreak McCorkle (2020) states that teachers see the social studies course as a course that contributes to the social integration of asylum seeker students. Similarly, according to Zayimoğlu Öztürk (2018), who examined the education for asylum seeker students according to the views of social studies teachers, social studies teachers consider the social studies course as an important course in ensuring the integration of asylum seeker students.

Participants complained about various difficulties while teaching the social studies course to asylum seekers. Sağlam and İlksen Kambur (2017) found that classroom teachers had difficulties in communicating with asylum seeker students. Similarly, in a study conducted Baloğlu Uğurlu and Akdovan (2019), both students and teachers experienced some difficulties during social studies teaching due to the differences that asylum seeker students have. On the other hand, in their study with social studies teachers, Cho and Reich (2008) voice that teachers experience various difficulties with asylum seeker students in terms of language, culture and values. Kuş and Önger (2020), who reported similar findings, also stated that teachers had difficulties with asylum seeker students in terms of language, culture, and adaptation.

Social studies teachers believed social studies coursebooks and curriculum should be revised following migration and asylum issues. Zayimoğlu Öztürk (2018) suggests that immigrant students' topics should be added to social studies coursebooks. Pehlivan Yılmaz and Günel (2021) recommend that social studies coursebooks should include more content on migration. Roxas (2010) examined teachers' use of cultural scenarios in teaching asylum seekers and shared the experiences of social studies teachers and various subject teachers.

According to the present study, social studies teachers consider the social studies coursebooks and curricula insufficient on migration and asylum issues. They believe the coursebooks and curriculum should be revised. They state that social studies course has an important role in teaching students about immigration and asylum. Besides, they think that social studies course is important in the social integration of asylum seeker students. Moreover, they experience various difficulties while teaching the social studies course to asylum seeker students. Based on these findings, various suggestions have been made:

- Further research can examine the role of social studies course in teaching the subject of migration and asylum within the scope of students' and prospective teachers' opinions.
- The content related to migration and asylum can be enriched in the resources for teaching social studies.
- Statistical research can be conducted on the role of social studies course in the social integration of asylum seeker students.
- Statistical research can be conducted on the difficulties that social studies teachers experience due to asylum seeker students.
- Future research can examine how social studies teachers can overcome the challenges they experience due to asylum seeker students.
- In-service training can be given to social studies teachers to help them overcome the difficulties they experience due to asylum seeker students.
- Social studies course teaching resources can be revised regarding the social integration of asylum seeker students.
- The Higher Education Institution can add a course to the curriculum of social studies teaching departments for student teachers to learn more information about migration and asylum.

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