How to navigate in society: An investigation into social studies education*1

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Abstract

This study aims to show the role of social skills in the social studies curriculum, the educational process, the problems encountered in the process, and the solutions proposed by teachers to these problems. The basic qualitative research method, one of the qualitative research methods, was used for the study. In this regard, the general objectives, competencies, skills, and abilities of the 2018 social studies curriculum were examined based on the Akkok classification of social competencies, and then, in light of the findings, focus group interviews were conducted with eight teachers, including fourth-grade teachers and social studies teachers. Content analysis was conducted in the first part of the research data analysis, and descriptive analysis was conducted in the second part. Considering the program's components, it is evident that social skills are not given much attention. When examining the learning content, it was found that only 16% of all grade-level learning content included social skills. Based on interviews with teachers, it was found that student-centred activities and creative drama were used most frequently to teach social skills. In addition, it was found that family and school were responsible for the difficulties in teaching social skills. Teachers proposed solutions to the problems to improve school-family collaboration and move away from a success-oriented education system. Based on the research findings, suggestions were made for practitioners and future researchers.

Keywords: Social Skills, Social Studies, Social Studies Curriculum, Social skills teaching

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INTRODUCTION

Throughout their lives, individuals require socialization and communication. It fulfils this requirement through a process of mutual interaction. Individuals living in the same society must possess social skills to communicate effectively, adapt to their environment, resolve conflicts peacefully, recognize and understand their own and others' emotions, and express themselves with ease. Because the stronger an individual's social relationships, the more entrepreneurial, innovative, and productive they become, and the easier it is for them to adapt to the society in which they live (Deniz, 2003; Gündoğan, 2015). Çubukcu and Gültekin (2006) define social skill as an individual's capacity to correctly comprehend himself and the person with whom he interacts and act accordingly. Different aspects of social skills have been the subject of numerous definitions in the literature.

Geertz (2003) defined social skills as learned behaviors that allow the individual to interact with others in a way that will enable them to receive positive responses and avoid negative ones. Bacanlı (1999) defined them as behaviors that allow individuals to interact with others effectively. According to Warger and Rutherford (1996), the social outcomes of these subsequently acquired abstract learned behaviors are favorable. Because social skills include problem-solving, problem-coping, emotional, and cognitive competencies (Öğretir, Özçelik, & Eke, 2018).Nonetheless, Argyle and Lu (1990) demonstrated that the hidden components of happiness are directly linked to social skills. A substantial body of research supports this view. People with inadequate social skills face social and mental challenges at every stage of their lives and struggle to overcome them. According to reports, individuals with this impairment perform poorly in school and manifest problematic behaviors such as hostility, violence, depression, and criminality. (Barton-Arwood, Morrow, Lane, & Jolivette, 2005; DeRosier & Lloyd, 2010; Stump, Ratliff, Wu, & Hawley, 2009).

Social skills are generally considered part of social competence (Warger & Rutherford, 1996). These concepts are confused with each other and used interchangeably. Because no distinction can be made between the two (Avcıoğlu, 2009). Individuals may be unable to gain social skills for some reason or may not have social competence even if they gain them. In other words, learning social abilities does not mean gaining social competence (Sazak, 2018).Although attempts are made to determine the difference between these two terms, making an appropriate and meaningful distinction is difficult.

Social competencies are a concept explained by the individual's ability to adapt to his/her social environment, be successful, and improve himself/herself (Stump, Ratliff, Wu, & Hawley, 2009). Determining social skills also helps determine social competence (Bacanlı, 2014). In other words, it can be said that the better the individual can use social skills in his/her life, the more social he/she is (Boisjoli & Matson, 2009). From this perspective, the concepts of social skills and social competence are distinct, but they can be considered as two completely inseparable concepts interacting with each other. In examining the definitions of social skills that exist in the literature, the cognitive and affective dimensions of social skills were also highlighted. In this context, he explained social skills as positive reinforcements, verbal and non-verbal behaviors, and skills learned by observation; some people mentioned that social skills should contain satisfactory results and provide happiness and effective communication if they are possessed. Based on the definitions made from different perspectives, many classifications have been made for social skills (Merrell, 2003). In their comprehensive study on social skills, Calderalla and Merrell (1997) grouped social skills into five dimensions and stated that they classified the sample skills covered by these dimensions as relationship skills with peers, self-control skills, academic skills, compliance skills and assertiveness skills. In their study, Goldstein, Sprafkin, Gershaw & Klein (1980) divided social skills into six steps: *basic social skills, advanced social* skills, *social skills related to coping with emotions, social skills alternative to aggression, social skills related to coping with stress, and social skills related to planning* (Akt. Topaç, 2022). The classification by Goldstein, Sprafkin, Gershaw, and Klein is similar to the classification of Akkök, which is also based on this research. Both classifications begin with beginner-level social skills. The family is the most important environment in which children can acquire basic social skills, often referred to as the skills that must first be mastered.

Growing up as a self-confident, effective communicator, and successful in interpersonal relationships is directly proportional to the reactions of adults at home and school (Akkök, 1996; Çubukçu & Gültekin, 2006). The primary influences on their social behavior are their families and educators (Cartledge & Milburn, 1986). As a result, the acquisition of social skills first in the family and then in the preschool period (Gülay & Akman, 2009), which is the environment in which they formally socialize, then in primary school, allows students to communicate effectively with each other. Itis is also important in terms of contributing to their cognitive and affective development. The child will face various hurdles and difficulties when speaking with their numerous new friends; however, taking real measures toward socializing that help the child develop into their unique personality will result in a great outcome (Guel, 2013). Therefore, great importance should be given to social skills teaching in schools. According to the findings of several studies on social skills and social skill inadequacies in children that researchers and educators have carried out, those children who do not have enough social skills run the risk of never having healthy social relationships in their adult livesIt is emphasized that children with inadequate social skills may experience lifelong difficulties in emotional areas, interpersonal relationships, academic life, and career success. (DeRosier & Lloyd, 2011; Lynch & Simpson, 2010; Perren & Alsaker, 2006).

Different opinions were expressed that many methods can be used in the process of teaching social skills.In this context, Avcıoğlu (2012) states that Guralnick and Nevillecan effectively teach social skills to preschool children through play; Sargent's direct, collaborative, peer teaching and cognitive process approaches can be used to age children; Wilson's modelling, verbalization, teaching, and role-playing methods can be used naturally; Pavlicevic and Ansdell's music therapy can be used; Freeman, Sullivan and Fulton's drama method can be used. Bacanlı (1999) states that different approaches and techniques can be used during the creation of social skills programs. In addition, in the preparation of these programs, it is stated that specific content can be created for the characteristics of the target audience, as well as joint programs that can be used in social skills training of more than one target audience can be developed. Çetin et al. (2003) stated that various methods can be used in the preparation of social skills training programs and that the quality of the trainer and the active participation of the participants are extremely important. In addition, it is of great importance to create an atmosphere where participants can feel peaceful. Thus, it is inevitable that a social skills training process with these qualities will yield successful results. There is no direct curriculum for the acquisition of social skills, but these skills are tried to be acquired within the scope of the achievements within the programs. On the other hand, social studies course has a very important role in acquiring these skills. Because social skills constitute an important dimension of socialization As is known, in the Social Studies course, the student learns the knowledge and skills that will make daily life easier; adapting to the environment and culture in which they live; producing realistic solutions to the problems he/she encounters in life; developing a positive attitude towards school, his/her family and society (Meb, 2018). Therefore, it is important to examine social skills in the elements of the Social Studies Curriculum to reveal teachers' views on social skills and the activities carried out to develop social skills. Because determining the place of social skills in the program and revealing the processes in the teaching process are a necessity to raise teachers' awareness of social skills, enable them to effectively use social skills in the teaching-learning processes of social studies teaching, and reveal the missing points for social skills in the program. There is no study examining social skills in the social studies program. There are studies examining social skills in the life studies program and preschool program. This study was designed based on the rationale mentioned above. This study aims to determine the inclusion of social competencies in the social studies curriculum and the teaching practices in this regard. In this regard, the following questions were answered:

- The Social Studies Curriculum
    - For general purposes
    - Competencies
    - Skills to be acquired
    - 4-5-6-7 how are social skills included in classroom achievements?

- What are the opinions of primary and social studies teachers about social skills?
- What kind of practices do primary and social studies teachers perform for social skills training in social studies courses?

METHOD

Research Design

The basic qualitative research design was used in this study to identify the status of the learning outcomes for social skills in the social studies course and the classroom practices according to teacher opinion used for this purpose.Basic qualitative research focuses on how individuals interpret reality in the social world. In other words, the meaning was created rather than discovered to reveal how individuals perceive their lives and experiences. Through observation, interviews, and document analysis, qualitative research uncovers data. Data analysis attempts to identify recurring patterns (Merriam, 2009). Therefore In this study, it was tried to reveal the experiences of teachers while giving social skills training.

Participants and Procedure

This study's data were collected in two phases. According to Akkök's social skill classification, the general objectives of the 2018 Social Studies Curriculum, competencies, skills to be acquired, and fourth, fifth, and sixth-grade achievements were examined in the first part of the study. In the second part of the research, focus group interviews were held with four fourth-grade teachers and four social studies teachers.

Table 1. Demographic Characteristics of the Participating Middle School Students

Teacher	Gender	Seniority	Place of Duty	Branch
T1	Female	14	Village	Primary School Teacher
T2	Male	18	Province	Primary School Teacher
T3	Male	13	District	Primary School Teacher
T4	Female	21	Province	Primary School Teacher
T5	Female	24	Village	Social Studies Teacher
T6	Male	15	Province	Social Studies Teacher
T7	Female	19	District	Social Studies Teacher
T8	Female	23	Village	Social Studies Teacher

As seen in Table 1, a total of eight teachers were interviewed. While selecting teachers, the criterion sampling method was taken as a basis. It was considered that teachers work in different socio-cultural settings, such as villages, districts, and city centres in different regions of Turkey, and have more than 10 years of experience. The interview was held online. 10 basic questions were asked in total. The focus group interview lasted 95 minutes.

Data Analysis

In basic qualitative research, data can be collected through interviews, observations, or document analysis (Merriam, 2009). This study's data were obtained through document review and focus group interviews. In this context, in the first part of the research, the researcher examined the 2018 Social Studies Curriculum elements in line with the criteria to find answers to the research questions. A descriptive analysis technique was used to analyze the data. In this direction, the scope of the study consists of the objectives, competencies, basic skills, achievements of the program, and the skills and values that make up the curriculum. Social skills are related to the cultural structure of societies. The most comprehensive classification about social skills made in the society in which the research was conducted is Akkök's classification.The classification made by Akkök (1996) for social sciences has been taken as a criterion to determine how social sciences are included in these items. Therefore, these criteria are listed below (Akkök, 1996):

1. ***First skills to be acquired:*** Listening, starting a conversation, speaking, asking questions, thanking, introducing yourself, introducing others, complimenting, asking for help, joining a group, giving instructions, reading instructions, apologizing, and persuading.
2. ***Skills for conducting business with the group:*** Following the division of labor in the group, taking responsibility for the group, and trying to understand the opinions of others.
3. ***Skills for emotions:*** Understanding and expressing one's own feelings, understanding the feelings of others, coping with the anger of the other party, expressing love, and good feelings, coping with fear and rewarding oneself.
4. ***Skills to cope with aggressive behavior:*** Understanding and expressing one's own feelings, understanding the feelings of others, coping with the anger of the other party, expressing love, and good feelings, coping with fear and rewarding oneself.
5. **Ability to cope with *stressful situations:*** *Coping* with a failed situation, group pressure, embarrassed situation, being left alone.
6. ***Planning and problem-solving skills:*** Deciding what to do, researching the causes of the problem, creating goals, gathering information, making decisions, a work concentration.

In the second part of the study, fourth-grade and social studies teachers participated in focus group interviews. Interview data were analyzed using the technique of content analysis. Content analysis can be defined as the process of systematically classifying and interpreting the content of written texts by identifying codes and developing themes or patterns (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005). In this context, the interview with the teachers was first transcribed into a written text, then the coding framework was developed, the initial codings were created, themes were derived from the codes, shared with two academics working in the field of social studies, their opinions were solicited, and the themes were finalized based on their input.

To improve the data's credibility and reliability, two academics and two social studies teachers were consulted.The researcher's findings were compared to those of specialists and practitioners. The comparison revealed that the outcomes were largely similar. This indicates that the researcher examined the data appropriately. In addition, direct quotations are used to increase credibility.

Ethical Considerations
This research was carried out with the approval of Kütahya Dumlupınar University, Ethics Committee for Researches on Social Sciences and Humanities, with the decision numbered "165173" in the session dated 22.12.2022.

FINDINGS
The findings are presented in two parts. These are social skills in the social studies program and social skills in social studies course according to teachers opinion.

Social Skills in Social Studies Program

Social Skills in the Purposes of the Social Studies Curriculum

There were questions about how social skills fit into the 2018 Social Studies Curriculum(SSC) goals. A total of 18 objectives were examined in the 2018 SSC, and the objectives that emphasize social skills are presented in Table 2.

As seen in Table 2, social skills are included only for three purposes. When these goals are examined, it can be said that the individual has an emphasis on having communication skills to strengthen their social relations and expressing his/her ideas for the solution of social problems, as he/she becomes aware of his/her wishes and needs to know themself physically and emotionally. These goals include skills for

conducting business with the group, planning and problem-solving, and emotions. It is seen that there are no goals for other skill groups.

Table 2. Social Skill Content Objectives in the Social Studies Curriculum

Purposes	Associated Social Skills
13. Ability to use basic communication skills and basic concepts and methods of social sciences to regulate social relations and solve problems encountered	skills for conducting business with the group
14. Believing in the importance of participation and expressing opinions to solve personal and social problems	planning and problem-solving skills
18. It strives to realize his/her physical and emotional characteristics, interests, desires, and abilities as a free individual.	Skills for emotion

Social Skills in the Competencies Section of the Social Studies Curriculum

The competencies section of the 2018 Social Studies Curriculum questioned how social skills are included. In this direction, the eight competencies in the 2018 SSC were examined, and the results and the program outputs are presented in Table 3.

Table 3. Social Skill Content Objectives in the Social Studies Curriculum

Competencies	Outputs	Associated Social Skills
Communication in the mother tongue	To interact linguistically appropriately and creatively in a social and cultural context.	*first skills to be acquired*
Communication in foreign languages	Communication in a foreign language, Intercultural Understanding	*first skills to be acquired*
Learning to learn	It is the ability to pursue and insist on learning so that the individual can organize his/her own learning action individually or as a group, including effective time and knowledge management.	planning and problem-solving skills
Social and citizenship-related competencies	It will enable them to participate effectively and constructively in society and working life. It covers all forms of behavior that enable it to be equipped with features that will resolve conflicts. It equips them to fully participate in civilized life based on a commitment to democratic and active participation.	*first skills to be acquired* *Skills for conducting business with the group* planning and problem-solving skills
Taking the initiative and entrepreneurship	Ability to plan and manage projects	planning and problem-solving skills
Cultural awareness and expression	Self-expression, Cultural awareness, Understanding emotions	*first skills to be acquired, Skills for conducting business with the group* skills for emotion

As seen in Table 3, social skills are included in six competencies. When these competencies are examined, it can be said that it is emphasized that the individual can express himself/herself, plan, take an active role in his/her own culture and different cultures, and respect differences. These competencies include the first skills to be acquired for conducting business with the group, planning and problem-solving and skills for emotions. The examination of competencies generally shows that great attention is paid to social skills.

Social Skills in the Basic Skills Section of the Social Studies Curriculum.

The competencies section of the 2018 Social Studies Curriculum questioned how social skills are included. Accordingly, 27 skills in 2018 SSC were examined, and the results are presented below.

Table 4. Social Skill Content Objectives in the Social Studies Curriculum

Skills	Associated Social Skills
Entrepreneurship	first skills to be acquired
Utilizing Turkish in a manner that is accurate, elegant, and productive	
Cooperation	skills for conducting business
Social engagement	with the group
Recognizing patterns and bias	skills for emotion
Critical thinking	
Empathy	
Self-control	
Decision making	planning and problem-solving
Problem-Solving	skills
Innovative thinking	
Research	

As seen in Table 4, 12 of the 27 skills are classified in the context of social skills. These are entrepreneurship, using Turkish in a manner that is accurate, elegant, and effective, cooperation, social participation, noticing patterns and prejudices, critical thinking, empathy, self-control, decision-making, problem-solving, innovative thinking, and research skills. These competencies include the first skills to be acquired for conducting business with the group, planning and problem-solving and skills for emotions. It is seen that there are no goals for other skill groups.

Social Skills in the Objectives Section of the Social Studies Curriculum

It was questioned how social skills were included in the objectives of the 2018 Social Studies Curriculum. In this context, the learning outcomes emphasizing social skills were determined by examining the learning outcomes in the program's fourth, fifth, sixth and seventh-grade social studies curriculum, and the tables related to the grade levels were presented in order.

Objectives that include social skills in the fourth-grade Social Studies Curriculum

The 2018 fourth-grade Social Studies Curriculum has 33 objectives in seven learning areas. The goals identified in relation to social skills are listed in Table 5.

Table 5. Social Skill Content Objectives in the Fourth Grade Social Studies Curriculum

Learning Domain	Learning Objectives	Associated Social Skills
Individual and Society	SB.4.1.3. Recognizes individual interests, needs, and abilities.	Skills for emotion
	SB.4.1.4. It puts itself in the place of other individuals with different characteristics.	Skills for emotion
	SB.4.1.5. It respects the different characteristics of other individuals.	Skills for conducting business with the group
Production Distribution Consumption	SB.4.5.1. It makes primary choices between the two by distinguishing between wants and needs.	first skills to be acquired
Active Citizenship	SB.4.6.2. Takes responsibility for words and actions in family and school life.	skills for conducting business with the group
Global Connections	SB.4.7.4. Respect different cultures	skills for emotion

When Table 5 is examined, six of the learning outcomes in the fourth grade SSC are classified in the context of social skills, with only four learning domains. Three of these achievements are in the field of 'Individual and Society ', and one of them is in the field of 'Production Distribution Consumption', 'Active Citizenship', and' Global Connections'. When these achievements are examined, it is seen that they include the skills to initiate and maintain the relationship, the skills to carry out a job with the group, and the skills for emotions. It is seen that there is no learning outcomes in the context of social skills in the remaining three learning areas. According to Akkök's classification, no achievements suitable for the

categories of skills to cope with aggressive behaviors, coping skills with stress, and problem-solving and planning were included in the program. It is seen that the social skills in the program are not sufficient.

Acquisitions that include social skills in the fifth-grade Social Studies Curriculum

In the 2018 fifth-grade SSC, there were 33 objectives in seven learning areas. Table 6 shows the objectives that were found to be related to social skills.

Table 6. Social Skill Content Objectives in the Fourth Grade Social Studies Curriculum

Learning Domain	Learning Objectives	Associated Social Skills
Individual and Society	SB.5.1.3. They act according to the duties and responsibilities required by the roles he/she takes in the groups he/she participates in as an individual aware of his/her rights.	skills for conducting business with the group
Production Distribution Consumption	SB.5.5.5. By cooperating, it develops new ideas based on production, distribution, and consumption.	skills for conducting business with the group

When Table 6 is examined, six of the learning outcomes in the fourth grade SSC are classified in the context of social skills, with only four learning domains. These achievements are in the learning area of 'Individual and Society' and' Production Distribution Consumption. When these achievements are examined, it is seen that they are in the category of conducting business with the group. In the remaining three learning categories, there are no learning outcomes in the context of social skills.. According to Akkök's classification, no achievements suitable for the categories of skills to cope with aggressive behaviors, coping skills with stress, and problem-solving and planning were included in the program. It is seen that the social skills in the program are not sufficient. Compared with general learning outcomes, it is seen to be very low.

Objectives that include social skills in the sixth-grade Social Studies Curriculum

In the 2018 sixth-grade SSC, there were 34 objectives in total in seven learning areas. The objective determined to be related to social skills are presented in Table 5.

Table 7. Social Skill Content Objectives in the Sixth Grade Social Studies Curriculum

Learning Domain	Learning Objectives	Associated Social Skills
Individual and Society	SB.6.1.3. Questions prejudices about differences to live in harmony in society	Skills for emotion
	SB.6.1.4. Participates in activities that support social assistance and solidarity in the formation of social unity.	First skills to be acquired
	SB.6.1.5 argues that solutions to a problem should be based on rights, responsibilities, and freedoms.	Skills to cope with aggressive behavior
Global Connections	SB.6.7.4. Questions about the effects of popular culture on the country's culture. It is realized how elements that do not belong to our culture affect social life through media tools	planning and problem-solving skills

When Table 7 is examined, six of the fourth grade SSC learning outcomes are classified in the context of social skills, with only four learning domains.These achievements are in the field of 'Individual and Society 'and' Global Connections' learning. When these achievements are examined, it is seen that they are in the categories of skills to be learned first, skills for emotions, skills to cope with aggressive behaviors, and planning and problem-solving skills. It is seen that there is no learning outcomes in the context of social skills in the remaining three learning areas. According to Akkök's classification, it is seen that there are no skills in the categories of coping skills with stress, skills to carry out a job with the group and skills for emotions. It is seen that the social skills in the program are not sufficient. Compared with general learning outcomes s, it is seen to be very low.

Acquisitions that include social skills in the seventh-grade Social Studies Curriculum
In the 2018 seventh-grade SSC, there were 31 objectives in total in seven learning areas. The objective determined to be related to social skills are presented in Table 5.

Table 8. Social Skill Content Objectives in the Fourth Grade Social Studies Curriculum

Learning Domain	Learning Objectives	Associated Social Skills
Individual and Society	SB.7.1.1. Analyzes attitudes and behaviors that affect communication and questions his/her own attitudes and behaviors	planning and problem-solving skills
	SB.7.1.2 Uses positive communication ways in individual and social relationships	first skills to be acquired
	SB.7.1.3. Discusses the role of media in social change and interaction	planning and problem-solving skills
	SB.7.5.5. Makes plans for professional preferences by taking into account new professions that emerge depending on the developments in the world	planning and problem-solving skills
Active Citizenship	SB. 7.6.4 Analyze the problems encountered in the implementation of democracy.	planning and problem-solving skills
Global Connections	Develops ideas and suggestions for the solution of global Problems together with his/her friends.	skills for conducting business with the group
	Questions stereotypes about various cultures.	Skills in planning and problem solving.

When Table 8 is examined, six of the learning outcomes in the fourth grade SSC learning outcomes s are classified in the context of social skills, with only four learning domains. These achievements are in the field of 'Individual and Society 'and' Global Connections' learning. When these achievements are examined, it is seen that they are in the category of the first skills to be learned, planning and problem-solving skills, and skills for conducting business with the group. It is seen that there is no learning outcomes in the context of social skills in the remaining three learning areas. According to Akkök's classification, it is seen that there are no skills in the categories of coping skills with stress, skills to carry out a job with the group and skills for emotions. It is seen that the social skills in the program are not sufficient. Compared with general objectives, it is seen to be very low. The comparison of social skills-based learning outcomes by grade level is shown in Graphic 1.
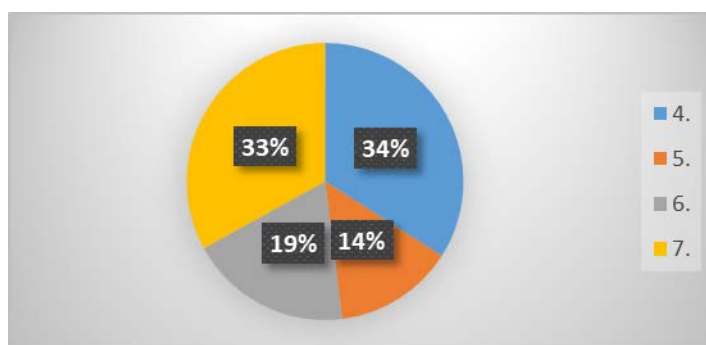
Graphic 1. Comparison of learning outcomes with social skills according to grade levels

As can be seen in Chart 1, the increases in social skills are in fourth grade with a high of 34%, seventh grade with 33%, sixth grade with 29%, and fifth grade with 14%. The comparison of social skills learning outcomes s with all objectives at each grade level in the social studies curriculum is shown in Table 9.

Table 9. Comparison of Social Skill Objectives with All Objectives at Class Levels

Grade Levels	Social Skill Objectives	All Achievements

	f	%	f	%
Fourth Grade	7	33	33	25
Fifth Grade	3	15	33	25
Sixth Grade	4	19	34	26
Seventh Grade	7	33	31	24
Total	21	100	131	100

According to Table 9, social skills comprise 7 of the total 33 achievements in the fourth grade (33%), 3 of the total 33 achievements in the fifth grade (15%), 4 of the total 34 achievements in the sixth grade (19%), and 7 of the total 31 achievements in the seventh grade (31%). As a result, when class levels are taken into account, the social skills content is primarily included in the eighth and seventh grades. Furthermore, it was discovered that there were 131 achievements across all grade levels in the program, with 21 of these (16%) being social skills.

Social Skills in Social Studies Course According to Teachers Opinion
The second and third sub-objectives of the research are to disclose teachers' perspectives on social skills education and their practices in social studies classes.As a result of the analysis of the interviews conducted in this context, teachers' views on social skills and social skills training in social studies courses were presented under two separate headings.

Findings Regarding Social Skills
Teachers stressed the importance of social skills in an individual's daily life. T4 explained why social skills are important by saying, "*children who have developed social skills at a time when interpersonal relationships are now very difficult to develop have strong communication skills and adapt better to society,*" and explained it as being able to communicate with someone they do not know and seek their rights, from daily life to social skills examples. T2, on the other hand, expressed the necessity of social skills as "*the individual should educate himself/herself sociologically as a part of the homeland for his/her own health and personal development, and should have social skills to integrate into today's information age.*". T2's points of view can be interpreted to mean that he values social skills because they are associated with being a good citizen. Teachers define social skills in a variety of ways. Table 9. Teachers' perceptions of social skills

Table 9. Teachers' perceptions of social skills

Relationship Social Skill	Indicators
Skills to initiate and maintain the relationship:	Self-expression, communication, self-confidence, emotional intelligence
Skills to run a business with the group:	Adaptation to society
Emotional skills:	Respect for differences
Skills to cope with aggressive behavior:	Assertiveness skills, rights, and responsibilities

As seen in Table 9, teachers explained social skills differently. T1 associates *social skills with driving and states that 'driving is based on knowing how to step on the brake, clutch and knowing the rules is based on knowing how to move in the society*'. In addition, T1 and T2 emphasized that this gradually regressed in children. T5 stated that the most important social skill is self-confidence and that if self-confident individuals are raised, they will acquire the remaining social skills. Later, he continued with the words "*it is very important for them to know that they have rights and to respect the rights of others while exercising their rights, I attach great importance to this in the classroom while giving them the right to speak*" and emphasized the importance of social skills in terms of social life. In the skills for emotions, only T3 and T7 emphasized respect for differences. T3 explained that '*one of the most important social skills for me is respect for differences, it is also mentioned in this social studies curriculum a lot, but when we look at society, in no way does nicknames in the slightest difference of the student or even violence and bullying, but we do not see this at the implementation stage*'. T3 attributed the reason students could not learn this skill to the fact that they were not treated this way in society. Finally, T8 gave assertiveness skills as

Journal of Innovative Research in Teacher Education, *4*(1), 113-130.

122

an example of coping with aggressive behaviors. Regarding the view of T8, "*when I think of social skills, I think of the ability to say no, which I could not do in my childhood and see as missing in my children. I think that the source of all the domestic and non-family harassment, violence and peer bullying that we see so much everywhere right now is the inability to say no.*" According to Akkök's classification, teachers provide examples of the first four skill classifications, but no definitions of 'coping skills with stress situations' or 'planning and problem-solving skills' are provided. Findings related to social skills education in the social studies course.

Findings related to social skills education in the social studies course
Teachers were asked to evaluate the Social Studies Curriculum regarding social skills. When the teachers' answers are examined, it is seen that social studies teachers 5-6-7. Classroom programs were sufficient in terms of social skills learning outcomes s, but the primary teachers responsible for the fourth-grade social studies course stated that the program was insufficient, and the social skills dimension was missing while unnecessary historical information was included. T3 explained that '*when we come to the fourth grade, there is a national struggle, the program took a week, but the subject takes three or four weeks, the subject remains abstract, the social skills dimension is missing, and we try to train the curriculum completely in the fourth grade*'. While T1 and T2 stated that there were learning outcomes s aimed at learning more social skills in the life science course by supporting T3, unfortunately, there was almost no national culture, national history, world history, and geographical information in the fourth grade. After the primary teachers explained their views, T5, who is a social studies teacher, said*, 'I want to remind our fourth-grade teachers that these issues may weigh heavily on my teachers and children, but they do not need to emphasize this much because they are forgotten when they reach the eighth-grade, they do not remember anything, and we give it in detail then they should give importance to the social skills dimension*'. In addition*,* he argued that *the social studies program is sufficient in terms of social skills by using the expressions' social studies secondary school program is quite sufficient in terms of social skills, rights and responsibilities, respect for differences, we process communication, we process being a good citizen*'.

When teachers are asked about the topics related to social skills in the Social Studies Curriculum, the answers given by the teachers are presented in Figure 1.

Figure 1. Learning Outcomes of the Social Skill Content in the Fourth Grade Social Studies Curriculum

As seen in Figure 1, teachers stated that there are rights and responsibilities for social skills, respect for differences, our roles, culture and heritage, social life, communication, effective citizenship, and learning outcomes s to democracy in the social studies program. In this context, when asked how they learned these achievements, teachers said they achieved them through classroom activities. Only T7 stated, ' *I think social skills should be in the social environment, so I try to travel and observe as often as possible*'. In addition, it was observed that every teacher used student-centered activities to develop social skills. T8, T6, and T1 stated that creative dramas are very effective in this regard, and T8 stated that "*Since social skills are an integral part of life, we process the learning outcomes by associating them with daily life, apart from that, I think creative drama is very effective in using social skills, and I use it constantly during*

class". T7 stated that the classroom is a living environment, so it enables students to use their social skills from the election of the class president to making many decisions. In T5, unlike other teachers, he drew attention to today's technology age and stated that he often used virtual museum and web 2 tools in the classroom. For this purpose, he said, '*There is technology in everything now; why not move it into the classroom? There are sites where we can find games. They learn by enjoying themselves and turn into more permanent tracked behaviors. They both improve their hand-eye coordination and learn how to support each other in the process. That's why I use it so much. I use the virtual museum a lot because it's a crowded school, and I can't take it all to the museum.* ' we couldn't rehearse…".

Teachers stated that they had problems during the social skills training process. When the difficulties experienced by teachers were examined in depth, it was revealed that the source of the problems was family and school. All teachers stated that the family was the wrong role model for students, so they could not internalize what they learned at school and put it into their behavior. S2' *I live in a disadvantaged region, the majority of my class is refugee, children face the wrong role model too much, you give in class, you think you are winning, the child is not valued at home, there is no respect between parents, the child does not feel understood, there is no environment to express himself, this makes what we do in the classroom in vain.*' His words conveyed the problem he was experiencing. In T3, *we have problems in internalizing and transferring to life by supporting T2, they apply to keeping the classroom clean and not throwing garbage in the classroom, but when he comes to the classroom door, he acts as if nothing has been talked about. Because it is not a role model at home, I feel like it is empty no matter what we do*. The reason for this situation was put forward as families. Considering that the family is the environment where the first social skills are acquired, it is thought that the learning outcomes cannot be internalized by children and transformed into behavior when there is no family-school cooperation. Again, unlike other teachers, T5 stated *that one of the sources of problems in social skills education is the media. In the videos they see on TV and the Internet, these speeches are often shown, and slang and swearing are presented as part of daily life. This is a waste of everything we teach.*"

On the other hand, T2 drew attention to both the intensity of the program and the exam-oriented education system with the words' *the program is very intense; we are focused on academic achievement, and we are trying to train students for exams*'. T3'on the other hand, '*there are not many opportunities for social skills, the learning outcomes s in the first three grades are quite good, 'Especially in the 4th grade. There are human rights and historical issues in the classroom program; we are officially bombarding information, we are worried about raising it, and there is not so much information density in other courses.* " He stated that the topics of the fourth-grade social studies program were intense and that there were no learning outcomes s in social skills. The problems he experienced in T5 were as follows: '*We started this job as idealists, but when we entered the process, it was not like that at all. We start the trial exams in the second grade. Families and school management do not tell us to raise good people. They say that this is not a success. They say that they want exam success. Education does not care. They want education and success.*' Based on the teachers' opinions, it can be said that the main problems for the school and education system are that we have an exam-oriented education system and that they cannot focus on the social skills dimension with the rush of training the program.

Teachers suggested numerous solutions to the problems they encountered when conducting social skills training in a social studies classroom.When the teachers' solutions for the problems they encountered were thoroughly examined, it was discovered that there were suggestions based on family and school. They proposed that family was the root of teachers' problems with social skill acquisition. Thus they proposed increasing cooperation between parents and families and providing education on social skills such as communication, empathy, conflict resolution, and emotion recognition. T1 'unlike other teachers, the necessity of developing the physical conditions of the school '*was made to prevent the child from gaining social skills. Playing with friends where the child will learn social skills, but the garden of schools is known everywhere concrete we are constantly running, jumping, and playing ball warnings. Secondly, where will the child gain social skills in theatre conference halls in Turkey? How many schools have these*

facilities? He expressed his problems by saying. For these problems, it is *necessary to organize sports halls, conference areas, and gardens for T1' schools. Otherwise, we should not expect any social skills development.* " T6, on the other hand, stated that students should be involved in projects in which they are definitely active in the process of social skills education with the words "*students cannot learn social skills by sitting in the classroom, they need to carry out useful projects for the society*". T6, on the other hand, drew attention to the excessive *course load and suggested that 'course loads should be reduced and students should be directed to more artistic sports activities'*. Teachers generally suggested reducing unnecessary learning outcomes s in the curriculum, directing students to more social activities, not focusing on exams in schools, and allowing students to express themselves in the classroom.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

The main factor in creating an ideal and livable society is social harmony among individuals in that society. The fact that people in such an environment have social skills contributes significantly to forming this environment. Individuals in societies that love each other, trust each other, respect themselves, the people around them, and other beings, behave empathically, with kindness, understand their responsibilities to themselves and their environment, know what to do and how to act, and succeed in achieving an effective solution in the event of conflict are closer to being an ideal and livable society. Social skills are developed in the family first then in school, where the child receives his or her first formal education. The social studies course is in charge of developing social skills. Its main goal is to raise individuals who are compatible with society. Based on this, this study aimed to investigate the inclusion of social skills in the Social Studies Curriculum and to reveal teachers' perspectives on social skills and the social skills teaching process. The elements of the Social Studies Curriculum were examined in terms of social skills in this study, which used a basic qualitative research design, and classroom practices were proposed to learn social skills. This section of the research includes the results obtained under the research findings, the relationship of the results with other studies in the literature, and suggestions for future studies. There are 18 general objectives in the Social Studies curriculum. When the objectives were examined, it was concluded that only three objectives were aimed at social skills. Considering that Social Studies is a discipline aimed at raising awareness of both the individual's personal characteristics and the events in the social and academic environment (Straus, 2007), it is thought that it is not right to include social skills so limitedly in their general goals.

The Social Studies Curriculum includes eight competencies based on 21—century skills. Competencies are explained in the program as the range of skills students will need in their personal, social, academic and business lives, nationally and internationally (2018, MoNE). When the concrete outputs of competencies and competencies are examined in the context of social skills, it is seen that social skills are included in six competencies. When these competencies are examined, it is seen that there are social skills for the individual to express himself/herself, plan, play an active role in his/her own culture and in different cultures, and respect differences. Although this seems to be quite common in general terms, it is seen that there is no skill to cope with aggressive behaviors and stressful situations. In addition, it can be said that there is inconsistency in the program because there is so much place in the competencies and so little place in the general goals and achievements.

The course includes 27 skills that are said to be prepared following the general objectives and competencies in the Social Studies curriculum. After examining these skills, it was determined that 12 skills were included in the context of social skills. When these skills are examined using Akkök's classification, it is clear that they are classified in similar skill groups and that there is no skill for dealing with aggressive behaviors and stressful situations as in competencies. This research result corresponds to studies in the literature examining the achievements of the social studies program (Balbağ, 2021; Büyükalan Filiz & Burak Baysal, 2019; Doğanay & Sar, 2019).

When the Social Studies Curriculum achievements are examined according to grade levels, it is seen that the achievements with social skills content are included at a maximum rate of 34% in the fourth grade, 33% in the seventh grade, 29% in the sixth grade, and 14% in the fifth grade, respectively. These, however, do not correspond with the findings of the teacher interviews. The primary school teachers stated that the fourth-grade Social Studies Curriculum did not provide enough social skill learning outcomes s. In contrast, the social studies teachers believed that the Social Studies Curriculum provided adequate social skill learning outcomes . The difference is thought to be due to teachers expecting the same intensity in the social studies course due to the intense gains in social skills in the previous year's life science course (Gündoğan, 2015).According to Akkök's classification, teachers defined social skills as the ability to initiate and maintain relationships (self-expression, communication, self-confidence, emotional intelligence), to conduct business with the group (adaptation to society), to deal with emotions (respect for differences), and to engage in aggressive behaviors in the second part of the study. When the curriculum was examined, it was discovered that the most common skill group had learning outcomes s in initiating and maintaining relationships and conducting business with the group. On the other hand, teachers defined social skills in terms of their ability to deal with aggressive behaviors, which were not included in the program. When teachers' definitions of social skills are examined in general, it is discovered that almost all emphasize self-confidence and communication skills. Furthermore, it has been demonstrated that success is associated with a classroom environment characterized by self-assured students and effective communication. This study's findings are similar to those of many other studies. As a result, social skill competence influences academic achievement (Wilkerson, Perzigian & Schurr, 2016). The learning-teaching environment must be used effectively for success if the reason for the effect of social skills on academic success is to be explained. Effective communication between the teacher and the student ensures the effectiveness of this environment. Social skills are required for positive relationship progression (Tepeli & Ar, 2011).

Teachers mentioned rights and responsibilities in classroom activities to develop social skills, respect for differences, our roles, culture and heritage, social life, communication, effective citizenship, and democracy. When asked how they obtained these learning outcomes s in this context, it was revealed that teachers received them through classroom activities. A lonely teacher stated that social skills can be developed both inside and outside of the classroom, so she frequently took her students on field trips.Furthermore, it was discovered that all teachers used student-centred activities to help students develop social skills, with drama particularly effective in this regard. Some methods are used when attempting to assign achievements related to social skills teaching. This result is supported by studies on the subject in the literature. Methods for acquiring social skills are chosen based on the suitability of options such as acquisition, group, and equipment, and teaching is carried out with a plan appropriate for the right method. Examples include role-playing, demonstration, modelling, coaching, direct teaching, cognitive process approach, cognitive, social learning method, peer supported learning, collaborative learning, and drama (Avcıoğlu, 2009; Çiftçi & Sucuoğlu, 2004; Kara & Çam, 2007; Lemmens, Valkenburg, & Peter, 2009). Furthermore, Çiftçi and Sucuğolu (2004) stated that social skill acquisition is generally achieved by observing and modelling people's behaviors; it is consistent with feedback from the environment. Similarly, teachers stated that the classroom is a social environment where students change their behavior through peer influence. It has been discovered that only one teacher employs virtual museums and Web 2 applications in his or her classroom practices, i.e., he or she uses technology in the teaching-learning process. Given that we are always intertwined with technology, it is thought that it is a situation in which only one of the teachers expresses that they engage in technology-related activities. However, while it has been shown in the literature that individuality and digital environments have a negative impact on people's social skills in general and children's social skills in particular (Greitemeyer and Mügge, 2014; Lemmens, Valkenburg, and Peter, 2009), there are also research results indicating the need to develop educational programs related to social skills. It has been discovered that there are issues with teaching social skills. According to the teachers' opinions, it was determined that family and school were the sources of the problems. Consequently, all of the family's issues stem from the fact that they are poor role models for the students. Given that social skills are primarily acquired

through modelling (Perren & Alsaker, 2006), it is expected that school-learned skills cannot be internalized through the influence of false role models. In addition, teachers generally stated that students in their classrooms were exposed to the wrong role model too often, but the child was not respected at home, and neither he nor his parents valued each other, making it impossible to develop social skills in environments devoid of democracy, respect, love, and tolerance. Similarly, it has been observed that they believe that what we do in the classroom is in vain because the child is not valued at home, there is no respect between parents, the child does not feel understood, and there is no environment where he/she cannot express himself/herself. According to Akkok (1996), a student may not be able to learn a social skill because he/she is fearful or shy or because there is not enough environment to acquire the skill. Çetin et al. (2003) stated that social skill development is impossible in environments where the individual feels unsafe. As solutions for family-related issues, teachers also suggested increasing school-family cooperation and educating families on social skills such as communication, empathy, conflict resolution, and emotional recognition.

On the other hand, the program's excessive intensity has resulted in an academic achievement-oriented education system. In fact, education and training are inextricably linked. Academic and social success should coexist, especially in primary school. The teacher is in charge of the most important task here. The excess of classroom resources, the high value placed on academic success, the shift from classroom to branch teaching, and the excessive density of curricula in the Turkish education system push the concept of socialization, which is one of the general goals of our educational system, to the background (Genç, 2005). Furthermore, many studies have shown that a lack of knowledge about the required social skills behavior is the primary reason people cannot exhibit that behavior. Many studies in this context use social learning theory to prepare the planning and application processes (Kara & Çam, 2007; Perren & Alsaker, 2006) . According to Çetin et al. (2003), Bierman concluded in a literature study that children who received structured social skills education gained socially acceptable behaviors and were accepted by their peers when they could transfer these behaviors into their daily lives. Teachers suggested that these issues be addressed in education programs alongside the educational dimension, that unnecessary gains be reduced, and that students be directed to social activities.

This study examines in depth the function of social skills in the Social Studies curriculum, classroom applications, difficulties encountered during this process, and proposed solutions to these problems.Based on the research findings, it is recommended that hands-on training programs be structured to provide information, emphasize cognitive, affective, and social skills for multi-faceted development, and increase school-family collaboration to raise parents' awareness of social skills issues. On the other hand, in the research dimension, it is suggested that applied studies be conducted in different classes and grade levels, as they are typically conducted with preschool students or within the scope of a life studies course. However, due to the absence of a family dimension, research on families is recommended.

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