

Characteristics of The Citizen of the Future According to the Views of Pre-Service Social Studies Teachers

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ABSTRACT

The present study aimed to allow pre-service social studies teachers to define the citizens of the future and to determine the characteristics of the citizens of the future according to pre-service social studies teachers. The study group included 19 pre-service social studies teachers attending Firat University, Faculty of Education and participated in the study on a volunteer basis. Criterion sampling method was used in the study. Thus, a semi-structured interview form that included open-ended questions was utilized to interview the students. In the study, the data were analyzed with descriptive analysis. The study findings demonstrated that pre-service social studies teachers defined the citizens of the future as individuals who love their homeland, adhere to the state and national ideals, are educated, well-informed, and aware of their rights and responsibilities as active citizens. The characteristics of the citizens of the future were described as well-informed, concerned, research-oriented, prioritizing national unity and solidarity, respectful, honest, charitable, and educated by the students. According to the pre-service teachers, citizens of the future should not be insensitive and irresponsible, betray their homeland and be useful, should not be self-seeking and selfish, uninformed, uneducated, unaware.

Key words: Citizenship, Citizen of The Future, Education, Global Citizen, Social Studies

INTRODUCTION

Do education systems train today's citizens to acquire the means to overcome global problems? What is the level of humanity, who face an increasing mass of global problems, in training the citizens who will find solutions for these problems?

According to Üstel (2016), the inclusion of civics as an independent course in the curricula is the product of a three-dimensional process. The first dimension is the recognition of the transformative role of education by the ruling elite due to the development of modern centralized states. The second dimension is the transformation of divine sovereignty into the "national sovereignty" in western nations after the second half of the 18th century. The third dimension is the transformation in the approach to childhood in the West since the 18th century.

Citizenship is one of the foundations of a state. The objectives of the education system include training citizens with social responsibilities and readiness for global developments. The concept of citizen is defined as members of a society with a single homeland sharing the same emotions. Citizenship is defined as being born, raised or living in a country (<http://www.tdk.gov.tr/>).

In Turkey, what kind of citizen does the primary school curriculum aim for? Elkatmış (2014) conducted a study to determine the citizen profile in primary school curricula. In the study conducted with document review, it was determined that a local citizenship formation that aims social adaptation and benefits such as nationalist and secular individuals during the initial years of the republic, democratic individuals during the multi-party era, and individuals with a pragmatic mind in the 1980s was adopted. In 2005 curricula, development of a global citizen was introduced as the most obvious and new objective.

Although the main objective was to train universal global citizens, certain problems pertaining to citizenship education are experienced in Turkey. Mery Karatekin, Bird (2012) conducted a study to theoretically compare the social studies education based on citizenship education in Turkey and the US. Study findings demonstrated that citizenship skills were not satisfactorily included in social studies education in Turkey. Balbağ Bayır, Ersoy (2017) conducted a study to determine the perceptions of teachers and students on Human Rights, Citizenship and Democracy Course. Study findings demonstrated that traditional evaluation techniques were insufficient to measure democratic value achievements of the students.

Ersoy (2016) conducted a study to determine the perceptions of social studies teachers and students on citizenship and democracy education. The study demonstrated that the course was not included sufficiently in the curriculum, the content was not adequate for the students to acquire citizenship skills, the significance of the course was ignored and the satisfaction level of teachers and students was low.

Gürel (2016) aimed to investigate the views of social studies and classroom teachers on human rights, citizenship and democracy. As a result, it was determined that social studies and classroom teachers considered citizenship education necessary in Turkey, however the education was not successful, and most classroom teachers and certain social studies teachers did not consider themselves competent in instructing the citizenship course.

Yigit (2017), Özden and Karadağ (2021) and Çolak, Kabapınar and Öztürk (2019) reported similar findings. In the study conducted by Yiğit (2017), it was determined that pre-service social studies teachers did not consider their knowledge on citizenship adequate, and their main source of information on citizenship were social media and the internet. In the study conducted by Özden and Karadağ (2021), it was determined that pre-service teachers were moderate level global citizens. In the study conducted by Çolak, Kabapınar, and Öztürk (2019), social studies teachers stated that social studies courses in Turkey were inadequate for training global citizens.

International studies reported similar findings on citizenship education. Diccico (2016) conducted a study at Olympus high school in Pennsylvania. The study was a five-year long ethnographic case study. It addressed the opportunities and challenges in global citizenship education in public schools in the United States. Study findings demonstrated that Olympus high school students were stressed about becoming an information worker in the global economy and social justice education. According to Bell (2016), several ministries of education focus on 21st century education. However, the context of sustainable education is ignored. Thus, the most important factor is the emphasis on development of employability skills. In this context, it is necessary to educate and transform the traditional education approach on how to make the world more sustainable.

Estelles and Romero (2016) conducted a study with a group of teacher educators at Cantabria University, Faculty of Education in Spain. According to the views of teacher educators, although the current education contributed to partially change the perception of nation state as the only focus for democracy and citizenship, it was very limited in acquisition of a global perspective. In the study, it was observed that the global perspectives of the teacher educators were also quite limited. The aim of a study conducted by Kopish (2017) was to clarify non-visible and challenging elements in global education. For this purpose, 23 pre-service teachers were assigned topics on global education. The study findings demonstrated that implementing certain applications was effective to a certain degree on improvement of their global competencies.

A similar study was conducted by Schoeman (2006) to determine the factors that contributed to good citizenship based on teacher views. The study findings demonstrated that teachers in Africa had a very specific and community oriented citizenship approach, while international literature revealed a more personal understanding of citizenship.

The definition and dimensions of citizenship have changed due to global developments. The above-mentioned studies demonstrated that there were significant problems about global citizenship in education systems. The citizenship profile of the future could provide a perspective for the system and administrators to solve these problems as soon as possible. Due to the fact that the social studies program includes the objective of training citizens, which is one of its three traditional approaches, it is necessary to review citizenship knowledge, skills and values in the era of globalism. The perception of pre-service social studies teachers on citizens of the future is important. Because, they would try to educate their students using this perspective. The research problem is the characteristics of the citizens of the future based on the views of pre-service social studies teachers. The citizens of the future should possess which characteristics and which characteristics the citizens of the future should not possess?

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

A qualitative research method, namely descriptive analysis model was adopted in the present study since it aimed to determine the views of pre-service teachers on the citizens of the future and the traits of the citizens of the future.

Participants

The criterion for participation in the study was completion of Citizenship, Democracy and Human Rights course by pre-service social studies teachers. The study group included 19 pre-service social studies teachers, who were attending Firat University, Faculty of Education and volunteered to participate in the study. Criterion sampling method was used in the study.

As seen in Table 1, 16 female and 3 male teachers participated in the study.

Data Collection Instruments

The present study aimed to determine the definition of the citizens of the future by pre-service social studies teachers and the characteristics of the citizen of future. For this

Table 1. Participant demographics

	f
Gender	
Female	16
Male	3
Total	19

purpose, a semi-structured interview form that included open-ended questions was used. Prior to the study, a pilot scheme was conducted, and semi-structured interviews were conducted with 5 pre-service teachers. The pilot scheme was evaluated and finalized in association with a field expert. The interviews conducted in the pilot scheme were not included in the main study. Pre-service teachers were asked open-ended questions to define citizen of the future. The following questions were included in the form in addition to the personal information about the teachers:

- i. Define the citizens of the future.
- ii. What are the characteristics of the citizens of future in your opinion?
- iii. Which characteristics the citizens of future should not possess in your opinion?

Data Analysis

Semi-structured interviews were conducted with 19 pre-service social studies teachers attending Firat University, during the 2017-2018 academic year. Descriptive analysis technique was used to analyze the data in the present study. “This type of analysis often includes direct quotations to reflect the findings in an organized and interpreted manner. The objective of this type of analysis is to present the findings to the reader in an organized and interpreted manner. For this purpose, the collected data are initially described systematically and clearly. Then, these descriptions are explained and interpreted, causality is addressed, and certain results are obtained” (Yıldırım Şimşek, 2005: 224).

All forms completed by pre-service teachers were read. The questions included in the interview form were presented as themes and the responses were presented as subthemes. The study was assisted by another field expert. The reliability formula, Agreement/Agreement + Disagreement × 100, was calculated in the study. Consequently, it was found that the reliability coefficient was 94%. Teacher views were frequently included and presented in detail in the study. The examples were presented based on three sub-themes for positive and one sub-theme for negative views. Excerpts from teacher views were presented using code names for teachers such as T1, T2.

FINDINGS

The study findings were grouped into three categories: the definition of the citizen of future, the characteristics of the citizen of future, and the characteristics that the citizen of future should not possess.

As seen in Table 2, most pre-service teachers defined the citizen of future as those who love their homeland, are adherent to the state and have national goals. Examples of teacher views were as follows:

- An individual who works hard as an individual for her/his country and nation and is willing to sacrifice all for this cause. [T2]*
- ... they are citizens who are adherent to their homeland and nation. [T10]*

Table 2. Definition of the Citizen of Future Based on the Views of Pre-Service Teachers

The definition of the citizen of future	f
Positive	
Patriot, adherent to the state and with national goals	8
Educated, well-informed	4
Aware of rights and responsibilities, active citizen	4
Technology user	3
Modern, contemporary, innovative and competent	2
Sensitive to the society and environment	1
Adherent to beliefs, principles and reforms	1
Critical thinker	1
Hard working and altruistic	1
Negative	
Without duties and responsibilities towards state and individuals	2
Ignorant in own culture	1
Intolerant towards others	1

Four pre-service teachers defined the citizen of the future as educated, well-informed and active citizens who are aware of their rights and responsibilities. The related views of pre-service teachers were as follows:

- ... should be educated, well-informed, self-aware ... citizens [T8]*
- They should be aware of their rights and responsibilities. [T14]*

Three pre-service teachers defined the citizen of future as individuals who use technology. The related views of pre-service teachers were as follows:

- We expect to be well-informed, wise, skilled and aware citizens. [T19]*

Three pre-service teachers defined the citizen of future as individuals who use technology. The related views of pre-service teachers were as follows:

- I think those who would make a difference in technology would be active citizens. [T3]*
- Those who follow technological advances well. [T18]*

Two pre-service teachers defined the citizen of the future with negative expressions such as individuals who have no duties and responsibilities towards the state and individuals. The related views of pre-service teachers were as follows:

- I think that they will forget about their duties and responsibilities towards the state and individuals. [T3]*

In Table 3, nine pre-service teachers described the characteristics of the citizens of the future as well-informed, curious, investigative, respectful, honest, charitable, and educated. The related views of pre-service teachers were as follows:

- ...should be well-informed, curious and investigative. [T4]*
- ...should be respectful, honest, charitable and educated. [T8]*

Two pre-service teachers described the citizen of the future as an individual who is aware of rights and responsibilities,

Table 3. Characteristics of the Citizen of Future according to Pre-Service Teachers

The characteristics of the citizen of future	f
Positive	
Well-informed, curious and researcher	9
Prioritizing national unity and solidarity and patriot	7
Respectful, honest, charitable, educated	7
Aware of rights and responsibilities	2
Venturous, unselfish, disciplined and with high goals	2
Knows customs and traditions	1
Questions everything	1
Should not be distant from science and technology	1
Negative	
Selfish and self-serving	2
Asocial and in communicative	1
Irresponsible in matters related to the state	1
Irresponsible in social matters	1
Low respect towards human rights	1
Powerful crushes the weak	1

venturous, unselfish, disciplined and with high goals. The related views of pre-service teachers were as follows:

Individuals, who fulfill citizenship duties, are aware of rights and responsibilities and are patriotic. [T14]

Venturous, unselfish, disciplined individuals with high goals. [T2]

On the other hand, two pre-service teachers described the citizen of future using negative characteristics such as selfish and self-serving. The related views of pre-service teachers were as follows:

I think that those will be asocial individuals without communication skills and forget about their responsibilities towards the state and other people. [T3]

As seen in Table 4, according to 14 pre-service teachers, the citizen of the future should not be insensitive and be responsible. The related views of pre-service teachers were as follows:

They should not be individuals who are lazy, non-inquisitive, non-investigative and do not fulfill their responsibilities. [T1]

Should not be insensitive. She/he should be informed about current knowledge. [T5]

In the opinion of six pre-service teachers, the citizen of the future should not betray her/his country and be useful.

Should not betray her/his country. [T11]

An active citizen could only be useful for the homeland and nation and take them a step further. [T13]

According to five pre-service teachers, the citizen of the future should not be self-serving and selfish, uninformed, uneducated, and unaware. The related views of pre-service teachers were as follows:

Should not be self-serving. Should have humanitarian and conscientious responsibilities. [T4]

Well-informed, with knowledge, contemporary. [T17]

Table 4. Characteristics that the Citizens of Future Should Not Possess according to Pre-Service Teachers

The characteristics that the citizens of future should not possess	f
Should not be insensitive and be responsible	14
Should not betray the homeland and be useful	6
Should not be selfish and self-serving	5
Should not be ignorant, uneducated and unaware	5
Should respect own culture and values	3
Should not disrespect individual rights	2
Egalitarian	2
Should not misspend her/his time	1
Should refrain from characteristics such as spite, property animosity, and harming the state	1
Should not be under the influence of popular culture	1

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

In the present study, the citizen of the future concept was defined based on the views of pre-service social studies teachers and positive and negative characteristics of the citizen of the future were determined. Study findings demonstrated that pre-service social studies teachers defined the citizens of the future as individuals who love their homeland, adhere to the values of the state and the nation, are educated, well-informed, and active citizens who are aware of their rights and responsibilities. The findings of the study were consistent with the studies by Bakioglu and Kurt (2009), Kondu and Sakar (2013), Özbek and Köksalan (2015).

In a study conducted by Bakioglu and Kurt (2009), teachers advocated the need for active participation. According to the teachers, students should receive patriotism education. It was concluded that school, social environment and family should act together in the development of patriotism. A study conducted by Kondu and Sakar (2013) investigated why citizenship and democracy education course was necessary. Based on the study findings, it was determined that responses such as training individuals who adhere to Atatürk's principles and revolutions and socially aware, to acquire awareness about the nation and national values, awareness about rights and responsibilities, awareness about respect for ideas and democracy were predominant. A study conducted by Özbek and Köksalan (2015) aimed to analyze the views of pre-service teachers about the objectives of citizenship education. According to the findings of the study, it was determined that the objectives should emphasize practice rather than theoretical information, development of awareness levels, respect to the values of both their society and other societies, adaptation to social rules, taking responsibility as good and active citizens.

In the present study, pre-service teachers expressed the negative characteristics of the citizen of future as individuals who abstain from responsibilities towards the state and individuals and are irresponsible. The present study findings support the results reported by Ereş (2015), Ncontsa and Shumba (2013). In the study conducted by Ereş (2015), it

was demonstrated that adults exhibited undesired behavior related to respect, compassion and honesty within the scope of adult character education and in the context of citizenship education, they exhibited undesirable behavior related to justice and responsibility.

Ncontsa and Shumba (2013) investigated the nature, causes and effects of school violence in four high schools in South Africa. The study findings demonstrated that bullying, vandalism, gangs, indiscipline, intolerance and punishments were common in schools. As a result of the research, it was determined that school violence led to loss of concentration, low academic performance and depression.

The students stated the characteristics of the citizen of the future as well-informed, curious, investigative, prioritizing national unity and solidarity, patriotic, respectful, honest, charitable, educated, aware of rights and responsibilities, venturesome, unselfish, disciplined and with high goals. The findings of the present study supported the findings by Kaya and Kaya (2012). Kaya and Kaya (2012) conducted a study to determine the perceptions of pre-service teachers about global citizenship in the technology age. According to the study findings, pre-service teachers who spoke foreign languages and used the Internet more than once per week and everyday had higher perceptions about global citizenship when compared to pre-service teachers who did not speak foreign languages and who did not use the Internet.

According to pre-service teachers, the characteristics that citizens of the future should not have were as follows: They should not be insensitive and be responsible, they should not betray their homeland and be useful, they should not be selfish and self-serving, they should not be ignorant, uneducated and unaware. The present study findings were consistent with the results of a study by Egüz (2016). In the study conducted by Egüz (2016), it was reported that the development of the perceptions of several pre-service teachers about global citizenship was not adequate. Furthermore, it was found that several pre-service teachers expressed their perceptions about global citizenship, however these expressions were mostly memorized stereotypical expressions found in citizenship textbooks.

According to Faiz (2018), one of the traits of active citizens is civic literacy. The aim of civic literacy is to train informed and participatory citizens who are sensitive to the environment. Individuals with civic literacy would positively affect the social and administrative development in the country. Social studies course also aims to train active citizens who are aware of social problems and produce solutions. Civic literacy contributes to the achievement of this goal (Faiz, 2018).

The following are recommended based on the study findings:

- Efforts should be spent to train citizens who have the capacity to produce solutions to global problems and respect universal values as well as citizens, who love their nation and state.
- New plans and projects should be supported by the public and private industries to promote active use of resources based on the qualifications of the citizens of the future.

- Investments should be made to develop new technologies.
- Educational approaches should be revised based on the qualifications of the citizens of the future.
- Research and development studies that would remove the negative citizenship characteristics in the future should be facilitated.

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