Curriculum, Teachers and Technology in the Turkish and International Contexts

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Edited by

Fatma Bıkmaz and Fatma Mızıkacı

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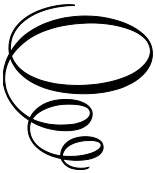

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We hope this volume will contribute to upgrading, deepening and extending the ideas on the curriculum and instruction field, resulting new perspectives on regional to worldwide issues.

Fatma Bıkmaz & Fatma Mızıkacı

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INTRODUCTION

This volume includes selected and adapted papers from two conferences, namely the Seventh International Congress on Curriculum and Instruction (ICCI-EPOK 2019) (chapters 1, 2, 3, 6, 8, 9, 11, 12, 14 and 15) and the Eighth International Symposium on Social Studies Education (USBES 2019) (chapters 4, 5 and 7), both organized by Ankara University, Faculty of Educational Sciences. Chapters 10 and 13 are included in this selection as parts of a thesis and a dissertation written in the curriculum and instruction field and co-authored by the organizing committee members of the ICCI-EPOK, 2019. Thus, the two conferences and defended graduate research work gave a good opportunity for the selection of the papers as they were enriched through question, answer and discussion processes. The selected papers are relevant to the purpose of the selection as they represent curriculum and evaluation studies, teachers' cognition and learning, and technology matters at hand.

The book was organized into three parts, which essentially represent perspectives from the field of curriculum and instruction. Chapters were characterized by the authors' approaches to particular issues, ranging from broad scope to specific focus. Changes in the world affect all aspects of education ahead of time. Educators, policy makers, decision makers and curriculum specialists, whether they work as theorists or practitioners, are under pressure to think and act rapidly to adopt new demands, which emerge with the changes. Curriculum and instruction, as a fundamental field with academic and practical aspects, has influenced, and been influenced by, particular changes in the world. These influences often become central to the academic discussions, scientific research, and even to the practice of school life.

Chapters in **Part I** focus on the questions of curriculum and evaluation in general, presenting discussions to allow further considerations about curriculum development and curriculum evaluation at national and international levels. Güven, in **Chapter 1**, presents a deep analysis of structural and legal regulations on curriculum and instruction within a national context. The purpose of her study is to make general inferences about K-12 curricula by explaining the legal and structural regulations from

1923 to the 2000s in Turkey. In **Chapter 2**, Bullen-Smith introduces the approach of the Cambridge international curricula. He describes design principles—alignment, coherence, spiral curriculum and accessibility—, curriculum structure—assessment, key concepts and embedding skills— and reviewing processes. The other three chapters in Part I are related to curriculum evaluation. Chapter 3 engages a set of criteria for the curriculum development process, and the other two chapters focus on curriculum evaluation studies done with K-12 and graduate programs. Yazçayır and Kılıç, in **Chapter 3**, propose a set of evaluation criteria that supports the scientific knowledge of the curriculum and instruction field to guide the curriculum developing process. In **Chapter 4**, Demirhan İşcan and Keleşoğlu make an evaluation study of the social studies curriculum, which was newly revised in Turkey, based on data obtained from program document analysis, surveys, interviews and observations to provide feedback. The last chapter of Part I—**Chapter 5**—deals with graduate program evaluation. Güven addresses the possibilities and the challenges of graduate programs in social studies in Turkey in many aspects, such as admission, program implementation, preparing and carrying out a thesis and assessment schemes.

Chapters in **Part II** address curriculum problems from the perspectives of educators and teachers, in particular. All five chapters in this section deal with teachers' opinions and beliefs on different aspects of curriculum and instruction. Kasapoğlu, Uyar and Kızılgöl, in **Chapter 6,** analyze teachers' views and practices on innovative thinking, while Sezer, Yiğit and Aynuz, in **Chapter 7**, examine educators' views on citizenship in relation to classroom implementations and curriculum. Similarly, **Chapter 8** questions how schoolteachers' perceptions of social capital relate to their behaviours towards students in a teaching context. University students' opinions change within a period of time, i.e., from first grade up to fourth grade as a result of various factors. On this, in **Chapter 9,** Hayırsever and İlhan make a metasynthesis study about how these changes in perceptions occur. Beliefs that teachers claim they hold about education might have direct influences on their interpretations and implementations of curriculum. A deep qualitative analysis of teachers' beliefs and the sources of these beliefs is presented in **Chapter 10** by Bayrak and Bıkmaz.

Part III of this book includes chapters dealing with curriculum implementations in relation to technology and the digitalization of curriculum. Teachers' attitudes and acceptance of technology have an effect on their integration of technology into instruction. **Chapter 11** examines pre-service teachers' approaches to the integration of technology with

teaching-learning processes and the anticipation of their use of technology in the future, when they are in service. **Chapter 12** explores flipped learning and its implementation in teaching–learning processes worldwide. In this chapter, Akıncı and Erdamar Koç used a content analysis method to make a synthesis of the studies done in twenty-six countries, between 2014 and 2019. **Chapter 13** introduces an online curriculum design to develop vocabulary self-learning. Düzel and Aslan then implemented it to explore the effect of its learning, according to learning styles. Savuran, in **Chapter 14,** presents a study conducted with refugee learners from ten countries speaking seven different native languages. The study addresses a fundamental problem, i.e., refugees learning Turkish as a language of the host country. In **Chapter 15,** Nayci examines faculty members' experiences and determines the problems they faced while they took the Learning and Teaching in Higher Education in the Digital Age course, within the scope of the Digital Transformation Project in Higher Education in Turkey.

Fatma Bıkmaz & Fatma Mızıkacı
Ankara
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PART I:

CURRICULUM AND EVALUATION STUDIES

CHAPTER 1

STRUCTURAL AND LEGAL REGULATIONS ON THE FIELD OF CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION FROM THE FOUNDATION OF THE REPUBLIC TO THE 2000S[1]

MERAL GÜVEN

It can be seen that significant steps have been taken in the curricula to develop national consciousness and to educate creative and productive individuals that the Republic demands, especially in its first years. After victory in the War of Independence, the Turkish Republic, under the leadership of Atatürk, has seen education as the main tool to keep up with the modern nations, to raise national consciousness, and to attain the goal of becoming an economically, socially and culturally independent nation. Consistent with these goals, education was based on the principles of modernity, secularism, national unity and science (Gültekin 2011, 63–84; Doğanay 2004, 2).

It may be claimed that, although the number of studies on curricula has increased in line with economic and social developments in Turkey, the perceptions and support of rulers have guided the studies. Consistent with the support and importance they give to education, some steps that may be considered significant in terms of educational history have been taken. On the other hand, sometimes, the studies have been interrupted due to the decrease in support provided by the rulers or the change in their perspectives. Also, scientific processes have not been reflected in the curricula due to these reasons. Examination of the curricula in chronological

[1] This study was presented at the panel entitled of "Curriculum Development Studies in Education from Past to Future" in the 7th International Congress on Curriculum and Instruction on 9-12 October 2019, Ankara, Turkey.

order shows that significant developments have occurred, especially after the foundation of the Republic (Aykaç 2011, 406).

The purpose of this study is to make a general evaluation of the curricula (of the Turkish education system) by explaining the legal and structural regulations in primary and secondary school curricula from the declaration of the Republic, in 1923, to the 2000s.

In this regard, primary and secondary school curricula are explained, respectively, and the revisions and developments in these curricula are discussed.

Developments in Primary School Curricula

After the foundation of Turkish Republic, in 1923, significant developments took place in primary education. The first curriculum of the Republic was the "Curriculum of Primary Schools," dated 1924. This program was designed by the Department of Primary Education over five years (Binbaşıoğlu 1999, 48; Varış 1996, 25). Almost all lessons were the same in its weekly schedule, which covered twenty-six hours of lessons. The objectives of the 1924 Curriculum of Primary Schools and the objectives of the subjects in the curriculum were not presented under titles, or under separate titles, but they were scattered throughout the subjects. The goal of primary schools was presented in detail within the content of *Musahabat-ı Ahlakiye and Malumat-ı Vataniyye.* According to this, as most of the pupils were not expected to continue their education after they graduated from primary school, they would go through some experiences that they had not encountered at schools, or that were impossible for them to encounter at their age, once they started their real life. The goal of curriculum was to educate these children as conscious individuals that make wise decisions in such situations (Maarif Vekâleti 1924, 31).

The Ottoman language (the language used in the Ottoman Empire) was the first course that was changed. Apart from that course, which was renamed Turkish language, the course *Musahabat-ı Ahlakiye* was renamed *Musahabat-ı Ahlakiye and Malumat-ı Vataniyye* in the recent curriculum. The curriculum was designed for boys and girls separately. In addition to the courses given to the boys, the curriculum designed for the girls entailed lessons in the management of house and sewing. Concerning the content of the curriculum, the most important change in the 1924 Curriculum of Primary Schools was made in the subjects that were covered in courses. The changes made were as follows: reorganizing the subjects, and putting an

emphasis on the meaning and importance of the Republic and the events that happened in recent history. The curriculum designed in 1924 was developed in 1926, after the law of the ministry of education was enacted in 1926. In this new curriculum, guided by the views of J. Dewey, the main goal of the primary education was to ensure the young generation to become good citizens by encouraging them to adapt to their environment (Binbaşıoğlu 2005, 48–56). It was the first time that a life sciences course took place in this curriculum (Çağlar 1999). In addition, in the 1926 curriculum, collective education was reviewed according to the principles of child, relative and close environment (Varış 1996, 26).

The curriculum for village schools was designed in line with the needs of children in villages in 1927. This curriculum emphasized the principles of teaching and learning and the behaviors that the students in villages were expected to gain.

The 1926 curriculum was revised in 1936, to fulfill emerging social demands. In the 1936 curriculum, the goals of primary education were defined in detail and significant principles of teaching and learning were determined. According to these principles, the primary school was defined as a national educational institution. Additionally, it was expressed that school must be a lively environment that would encourage children to be active and creative. Besides, it was stated that the courses must be consistent with the developmental level and characteristics of the child and, also, with the principles of the local environment and recent times. Last, it can be seen that an effort was made to help children gain the self-study styles and the habit of using their leisure time effectively (1936 İlkokul Programı 1936, 17–34).

In line with the decisions made in the First National Education Committee, a five-year plan for primary schools in villages was prepared. Thus, the aim was to minimize the differences between the primary schools in rural and urban areas.

After the declaration of the Republic, teacher training programs were revised and diverse models were applied for different teaching levels. As the studies of education in villages gained importance, four different models "village teaching schools (köy muallim mektepleri), lecturers' courses (eğitmen kursları), village teacher schools (köy öğretmen okulları) ve village institutions (köy enstitüleri)" were applied between 1927 and 1954, in order to educate teachers that are capable of adapting to the village conditions and meeting the needs of the people in the villages. Village

institutions were established, with law number 3803 for village institutions and with the joint efforts of Hasan Ali Yücel and İsmail Hakkı Tonguç, on April 17, 1940.

In addition to general culture and professional knowledge, village institutions aimed to make teacher candidates acquire knowledge and skills on health, agriculture, and technology in an applied way. They set a good model in terms of training versatile teachers not only in Turkey, but also all around the world. The curricula of village institutions were revised and some changes were made in 1943, 1947 and 1952. The latest changes included reducing the number of technology lessons while raising the number of general culture lessons. Due to the view that it is not possible to train teachers and farmers, and artists in institutions that aim to train teachers, village institutions were converted to "schools of village teachers," under law number 6234, which was enacted in February, 1954. Village institutions, involving one of the most important curriculum development studies in Turkish history, played a significant role in realizing the social and economic changes demanded from them.

The 1948 Primary School Curriculum was enacted in the 1948–49 academic year and became the longest standing curriculum in the history of the Republic, after it was used for twenty years (Cicioğlu 1985, 99). The 1948 Primary School Curriculum was developed taking into account the shortcomings of previous curricula. This curriculum was developed by integrating the 1936 Primary School Curriculum with the 1939 Village Primary School Curriculum. Citizenship was emphasized, especially in order to transform the cultural values of students. The main purpose was to reflect national culture on the students. The studies of the teachers in the Gazi Education Institute's pedagogy department were utilized to develop the 1936 curriculum and the 1948 curriculum (Varış 1996, 26). The goals of Turkish education, not the goals of primary school, were presented in the 1948 curriculum. The goals of Turkish education were classified into four categories concerning society, person, relationships among people, and economic life (MEB 1948, 18–34).

The objectives of the courses were given at the beginning of the curriculum for each lesson and in the form of general statements in terms of teacher behavior. Most of the goal statements were in the form of the general objectives of the school subjects, which cover all the lessons in which they are taught. Only the objectives for mathematics and Turkish language lessons were defined.

In 1951, Kate Wofford, from the USA, was invited to identify the difficulties encountered in the implementation of the 1948 Primary School Curriculum and to carry out studies. As a result of the four-month study, Wofford prepared a report on the revision and development of the 1948 curriculum. Also, mentioning the problems related to primary education in the fourth and fifth national education committees led to the regulations regarding the 1948 curriculum.

The most important study on primary school curricula was initiated in laboratory schools, in Bolu and Istanbul provinces, and was then implemented in schools in fourteen provinces. Bolu laboratory schools were opened in the 1953–54 academic year and were evaluated at the end of the 1960–61 academic year and laboratory schools in Istanbul were opened in the 1955–56 academic year and they were evaluated at the end of that academic year. Although control schools were selected for primary school studies, based on principles such as students studying in a free atmosphere and being involved in social activities, the flexible behavior of teachers in the arrangement and the order of the subjects, these schools could not be assigned as laboratory schools, for curriculum development studies as they were not systematically and constantly used for evaluation studies. Revision and development of the 1948 curriculum were based on the report of the Commission that was held in Ankara and Istanbul on certain dates in 1960 and that was responsible for the "Preparation of National Education Plan." Also, consideration of students' psychological needs in this report added a new dimension to curriculum development (Tazebay 2000, 85; Gözütok 2003, 60).

The provisions brought by the primary education law numbered 222, which was enacted in 1961, made it obligatory to develop and revise the curricula (Demirel 1999, 14–15). A preliminary curriculum draft for primary schools was prepared in 1962 as a result of the criticisms of primary school curricula and the examination reports of the commissions. After, the draft curriculum was examined by the Board of Education and Discipline and it was put into practice on September 5, for a trial period of five years in particular schools, according to law number 215 and dated September 12, 1962.

The 1962 draft curriculum provided a basis for the 1968 curriculum and it was put into practice in the 1968–69 academic year, after the piloting study initiated in primary schools in villages, towns and cities in 1962 (Arslan 1999, 42). The most important feature of the 1968 curriculum was that it directed students to study and research, and emphasized a student-centered education rather than a teacher-centered education. Additionally, while the

primary school curricula implemented prior to the 1968 curriculum were designed separately as village–town–city curricula, the 1968 curriculum was designed as a uniform curriculum that eliminated this distinction throughout the country. In the 1968 Primary School Curriculum, the objectives were student-centered (Tekışık 1992, 24–27; Binbaşıoğlu 1999, 48–56; Akbaba 2004, 54–55). The most prominent feature of this curriculum was that it was based on three principles: close environment, consolidation in teaching, and subjects and units (Türkoğlu and Sarı 2006, 329). In the primary school curriculum, the close environment is called the neighborhood principle and it encourages the children to use the environment as a training laboratory. The consolidation in teaching is about reducing the number of courses and combining them under general headings. Regarding the organization of the lessons in the curriculum, the lessons are divided into two groups as pivot lessons and expression and skill lessons. In the first three grades, the life science lesson is assigned as the pivot lesson and other lessons are assigned as expression and skill lessons. Similarly, in the fourth and fifth grades, life science and science lessons are assigned as the pivot lessons and other lessons are assigned as expression and skill lessons. Regarding the subjects and units, subjects are reduced and organized in terms of units. The 1968 Primary School Curriculum is a "Framework Curriculum." For this reason, the units in the pivot lessons have been identified as main items to meet common goals throughout the country, and the details have been elaborated in the required way. Flexibility provided in the curriculum allows teacher to change the order of the topics, select the details and remove the topics that are not found in the environment, or that cannot be examined.

With the Basic Education Law, numbered 1739 and enacted in 1973, the Turkish education system was comprehensively reorganized. In primary education, which constitutes the most basic step of the Turkish education system, five-year primary schools and three-year secondary schools were combined and they formed the eight-year basic education level. However, compulsory and continuous eight-year basic education was carried out twenty-five years later. Accordingly, eight-year primary education, which is compulsory for all primary school children, was put into practice in the 1997–98 academic year, after the enactment of law number 4306, in 1997.

After 1980, curriculum development studies have been carried out on the basis of courses, instead of developing the whole primary school curriculum. Regarding the period from the 1968 curriculum to 1997, it can be seen that, in the primary school curricula published in 1985 and 1988, some changes have been made in the science, mathematics, and physical education curricula, in order to keep up with innovations in science and

technology. Also, the topics of social studies, and religious studies and moral lessons have been changed frequently. However, in essence, these curricula are based on the 1968 curriculum.

After the transition to eight-year, continuous and compulsory primary education, primary and secondary education curricula were combined, from the outset of the 1997–98 academic year, and the 1997 primary education curriculum was designed. Like the 1968 curriculum, the titles preserved in the 1997 curriculum were as follows: general principles related to the implementation of the curriculum, close environment, consolidation in teaching, topics and units. (MEB 1997, 11–35). Studies were carried out, in the fourth and fifth grade curricula, especially, and in the sixth, seventh and eighth grade curricula, to extract repetitions and unnecessary details (Çağlar 1999, 127). Unlike the previous elementary school curricula, the 1997 curriculum was the first designed with separate curricula for each grade. Curricula of life science, social studies, science and mathematics courses were developed in line with this perspective.

Developments in Secondary School Curricula

Decisions taken at the Education Congress, held in Ankara between July 15 and 21, 1921, formed the first legal basis for the establishment of a national education system. In his opening speech at the convention, Atatürk stressed the necessity of an effective education system in the establishment and maintenance of modern Turkey. At the Education Congress, it was emphasized that education should be national, secular, scientific, broad and egalitarian, and functional (Kaya 1989, 16–17; Güven 2011, 135).

One of the issues discussed at the Education Congress was the restructuring of secondary education and the development of curricula. In the congress, where the opinion of converting the Idadi schools (high schools in the Ottoman Empire) to high schools was expressed, a full consensus was reached in the discussions about the goals and curricula of secondary education, and all of the participants in the congress agreed on simplifying and localizing the education and making it feasible (MEB 2007a, 15; Güven 2011, 135).

On March 3, 1924, with the adoption of the Law on Unity of Education, Idadi and Rüştiye schools (secondary schools in Ottoman Empire) were converted to three-year high schools and three-year secondary schools, respectively. With these initiatives, secondary education was structured in a three-year, two-level format and secondary schools were considered as

institutions that prepare students for high school, and high schools for higher education. Additionally, secondary education curricula were revised according to the view that professional knowledge should be taught during secondary education (Doğan 1999, 198).

In the early years of the Republic, as well as the arrangements made in the education system, curriculum development studies were continuously carried out. As a result of curriculum development studies, courses that were difficult for students were eliminated from the curricula and concepts related to the Republic were included in them, and the needs of the society were reflected in the curricula. The first arrangement was made in 1924. Consistent with this arrangement, courses that entailed abstract knowledge, such as law, economics, philosophy, psychology, and Turkish-Islamic history in the previous secondary school curriculum, were excluded from the curriculum. Last, the sociology course was included into the high school curriculum (Doğan 1999, 199).

Similarly, after the adoption of the new Turkish alphabet, based on the Latin alphabet, on November 1, 1928, Arabic and Persian courses were eliminated from the high school curricula at the outset of the 1929–30 academic year in order to increase the literacy rate, make teaching easier, and make Turkish the common language throughout the country (Akyüz 2001, 24).

In the 1930s, Atatürk gave great importance to the courses taught at high schools and he claimed that they must fulfill the social and economic needs of society. Courses were organized according to the views of Atatürk and the needs of Turkish society (Cicioğlu 1985, 174).

In the secondary school curricula that were put into practice in 1932, physics, chemistry and natural sciences courses that were theoretically taught in the previous curricula were combined under the science lesson. The goal of the science was associated with the student in order to redefine it. In addition, the content of the courses, such as mathematics, science and civics (a course including basic knowledge on citizenship, rights and so on) were reorganized in line with student needs (Doğan 1997, 199).

Courses were regrouped in high school curricula designed in 1931. Geometry, algebra, personal accounting, mechanics and cosmography courses were gathered under the name of “mathematics.” Also, the civics course was included in the high school curriculum in 1932. Free self-study hours were added to secondary and high school curricula (Doğan 1999, 199). The

Discipline Directive, issued in 1939, attempted to explain the desired character of the Turkish students.

In 1937, the secondary school curriculum was revised and developed. Beginning from the outset of the 1940–41 academic year, the classical branch class was opened in the first grades of high schools and Latin lessons were taught, together with other foreign languages. In 1949, the classical branch class was abolished, but Latin courses continued in some major high schools (Akyüz 2001, 29).

As a result of the decision taken by the Fourth National Education Committee, in 1949, high schools were extended to four years, beginning from 1952, and a four-year high school curriculum was developed. Four years later, high schools were again reduced to three years (Akyüz 2001, 29).

Maarif High Schools, in which English was the main medium of instruction, were opened in 1955 and they continued the education as private or government schools. Beginning from 1987, they were named Anatolian high schools (Akyüz 2001, 29).

In the 1950s, in addition to preparing students in secondary and high schools for upper education, multi-program school practices were initiated in order to establish a connection between school and life (Doğan 1997, 207).

The Laboratory School Curriculum Commission, established by thirty-five teachers at Istanbul Atatürk Girls' Vocational High School, prepared a draft curriculum in the 1953–54 academic year. The studies carried out by the commission resulted in a curriculum that prioritized the needs and characteristics of the individual, that educated good person and citizen, that aimed at whole development of the individual, and that educated the individual who would be functional in society. A similar practice was initiated in 1956 in the Ankara Bahçelievler High School. The draft curriculum, prepared initially by the Laboratory School Curriculum Commission in the Istanbul Atatürk Girls' Vocational High School, was pioneering in the curriculum development studies in secondary education (Varış 1996, 27).

Science high schools were opened in 1964 to train scientists and educate students to follow scientific and technological developments (Güven 2011, 140).

In 1965, the Private Education Institutions Law, numbered 625, which regulates the opening conditions of private schools, courses and classrooms, was enacted and laboratory high schools and modern science curricula were initiated in the same year (Doğan 1997, 207).

In order to find solutions to all problems, the practice of "passing the class" was replaced with the practice of the "course passing and credit system," which was one of the most important initiatives in secondary education. This system aimed to guide and improve students according to their interest, need and talent, to help them progress in a particular field, to evaluate their success instead of failure, and to create a democratic learning environment. As a result of the decisions taken in the Eighth and Ninth National Education Committees, this system was put into practice for the first time in sixteen high schools in the 1974–75 academic year, under the name of the passing the course and credit system project. However, due to a number of problems encountered in the implementation of the project, it was removed from practice, which was consistent with the Board of Education and Discipline in 1978 (Güven 2011, 145; Sözer 1993, 48).

After this attempt, this system was restarted in 1991–92 academic year as a result of an unexpected, sudden decision. The system, which was tried for the first time in many schools in a comprehensive and determined manner, was made compulsory in all high schools in 1992–93 academic year. However, in spite of its many positive aspects, this practice was completely abolished in the 1995–96 academic year as a result of political decisions and interests (Güven 2011, 145).

In line with the decisions made in the meeting of the National Education Committee in 1974, an integration between the secondary school curricula was achieved and the courses were categorized into three groups as compulsory, elective, and private or vocational (Güven 2011, 145).

After 1975, a number of changes were made in courses that took place in high school curricula. Concerning one of these changes, guidance and educational branch courses started to be implemented as extracurricular activities and necessary explanations were presented in the regulations (Güven 2011, 145).

Significant developments occurred in curriculum studies in the 1980s. The Ministry of National Education created a new curriculum development model, in 1982, in collaboration with scientists at universities in order to

ensure that all curricula to be designed and developed, thereafter, would be in accordance with this model (Demirel 1999, 16–17).

One of the significant initiatives in the Turkish Education System was the National Education Development Project that was signed with the World Bank on May 18, 1990, and published in the Official Gazette, with the law number 20570, on July 10, 1990. The project aimed to carry out a number of reform and restructuring studies that would enable national education to achieve the goals desired. Among the important objectives of this project were developing curricula, increasing the quality in teacher education, and raising the standards. (Milli Eğitimi Geliştirme Projesi 2007, 22). In 1993, a new curriculum development model was initiated by the Ministry of National Education, Education Research and Development Department (EARGED) as part of National Education Development Project. The EARGED model was initiated by the Board of Education and Discipline and the commission included branch teachers, instructors or lecturers, curriculum development experts, school administrators, educational psychologists, sociologists and economists, and representatives of the National Ministry (Gözütok 2003, 60; Yıldırım 1994, 158).

According to the model, the steps followed in curriculum design studies are as follows: conducting needs analysis research and identifying general, specific and behavioral objectives, accordingly, creating the table of specifications, revising the curriculum according to the results of the unit plans practiced in laboratory schools, and conducting curriculum evaluation studies (Yıldırım 1994, 158).

Curriculum Laboratory Schools (CLS) were established in order to achieve the objectives of the National Education Development Project. CLS are pilot schools where curricula are tested, in the field, along with materials that support teaching and learning, and where curricula are implemented at all teaching levels. The curricula developed as part of this project were extended to other schools after the pilot studies conducted in these laboratory schools (Güven 2011, 146; MEB 2007b).

One of the most important developments in the 1990s was that curriculum development studies were initiated, with the expert committees for different courses (such as Turkish, mathematics, fine arts, science, history), established by the National Ministry in the meeting of the Assessment and Curriculum Development Experts' Committee. After the number of these committees was raised to twelve, they were requested to implement the curriculum development model accepted in 1983. However, as the committees could

not reach a consensus in this regard, they continued the curriculum development studies independently (Demirel 1999, 17).

In 1995, the National Education Directorates were empowered to carry out curriculum development studies and the "Directive on Curriculum Design and Development Commissions of the National Education Directorates" was published in the Journal of Communiqué, no. 2428. As a result, steps have been taken to ensure that Provincial National Education Directorates also take part in the curriculum development studies (Demirel 1999, 17).

In the Ninth National Education Committee, held on June 24 to July 4, 1974, problems in secondary education were discussed. The decisions taken in the meeting were as follows: developing the curricula that prepare students for both professions and tertiary-level education as well as life and diverse work areas, guiding and preparing students for vocational and technical education, and fostering the cooperation between school and industry. In line with the decision related to the cooperation between school and industry, efforts were made to eliminate the disconnection between vocational schools and enterprises as part of the Apprenticeship and Vocational Education Law, no. 3308, which was adopted in 1986. Similarly, the aim was to develop teaching modules in line with the needs determined as part of Vocational and Technical Education Development Project (METGE), as well as to carry out the studies in cooperation with the sector, universities, and various institutions and organizations (Doğan 1997, 208).

General Evaluation

Considerable changes in the curricula implemented in all levels of the Turkish education system were made up until the 2000s. Despite the significant steps taken to develop curricula, these studies have always been repetitive. Until the 1950s, the "course' list" or "content" approach was dominant in the curriculum development process. The examination of these curriculum studies demonstrates that curriculum development studies primarily focused on the inclusion of courses that emphasize the basic values citizens needed to gain after the Republic was established, or the increasing numbers of these courses, or the elimination of courses that didn't fulfill these aims. Additionally, a holistic approach was adopted in curriculum development studies carried out before the 1950s, and the studies didn't aim at developing the curriculum on the basis of courses.

Tevhid-i Tedrisat Law (the Law on Unity of Education), Heyet-i İlmiye (Science Committee) decisions, and legal arrangements for the Ministry of

Education formed the legal basis for curriculum studies. The revisions made in curricula after these legal arrangements were not in the form of curriculum development studies, but were the revisions made to correct the points indicated by the laws. Also, guiding principles, such as collective education and the close environment, formed the basis of the curricula developed.

Besides, although the reports prepared by foreign experts (John Dewey, Kate Woffard) had important effects on the curricula, these effects could not go beyond the superficial changes reflected on the general view or principles of the programs.

Courses' objectives in the curricula, until the 1948 curriculum, were not revised; on the contrary, the revisions were made in the goals of national education, or specific or general objectives of primary education. Although changes were made every ten years to meet recent requirements of the curricula, they either could not fulfill these requirements or had a structure that was separate from the individual.

Curriculum development studies were initiated in 1953–54, in both primary and secondary education. The piloting studies conducted in primary and secondary schools are especially valuable in terms of curriculum development studies done in Turkey. However, curricula could not go beyond drafts for reasons including repetitive trials, interruptions and insufficient curriculum evaluation studies, although, some promising studies do exist, such as piloting the 1962 draft curriculum for many years in order to solve problems before putting it into practice. On the other hand, it can be claimed that such practice is disappointing, in terms of curriculum development, as well. As a similar quality curriculum study has not been carried out, thereafter, the 1962 curriculum study is an indicator of both failure and success in curriculum development.

Due to the holistic curriculum development perspective that was dominant until the 1980s, the studies focused on additions, subtractions or changes in names. However, from the outset of the 1980s, curriculum development studies were done on the basis of courses. After the transition to the practice of the eight-year basic education, in 1997, curriculum development studies were carried out for all lessons. The fact that National Education Curriculum Development models introduced between 1983 and 1993 were not considered, implemented or discussed in these studies could be considered as an extension of the search in the curriculum development process.

Similar to all other countries that are governed by central government policies, educational policies in Turkey are carried out in the center. As it was in the past, presently, a standard framework throughout the country is prepared for primary and secondary school curricula. Although it is said that curricula are only the standard framework, and so flexibility at the local level is allowed, this framework is far from being functional and dynamic for some reasons. First of all, curriculum development studies are carried out centrally and, mostly it is a desk work. Also, successful practices in other countries are reflected in the curricula without questioning. Last, needs analysis studies lack depth, which results from the fact that the commissions established for curriculum studies limit the data to the views of teachers, students, and parents, so the results of the needs analysis studies are achieved without on-site observation and in-depth analysis. For instance, such an explanation was presented for development studies of the Board of Education's curricula, which started to be tested in 2017 and was officially put in force in 2018 (http://mufredat.meb.gov.tr/Programlar.aspx).

> At the beginning of the studies on the draft curriculum, which was renewed and put into the suspension process, necessary basic skills and competencies and the ones required for the students to be successful in higher education, work, and daily life were determined. In this regard, information obtained at the end of monitoring and evaluation studies were examined as well as the findings and suggestions proposed as a result of the researches carried out by different institutions and a comprehensive literature review was conducted…

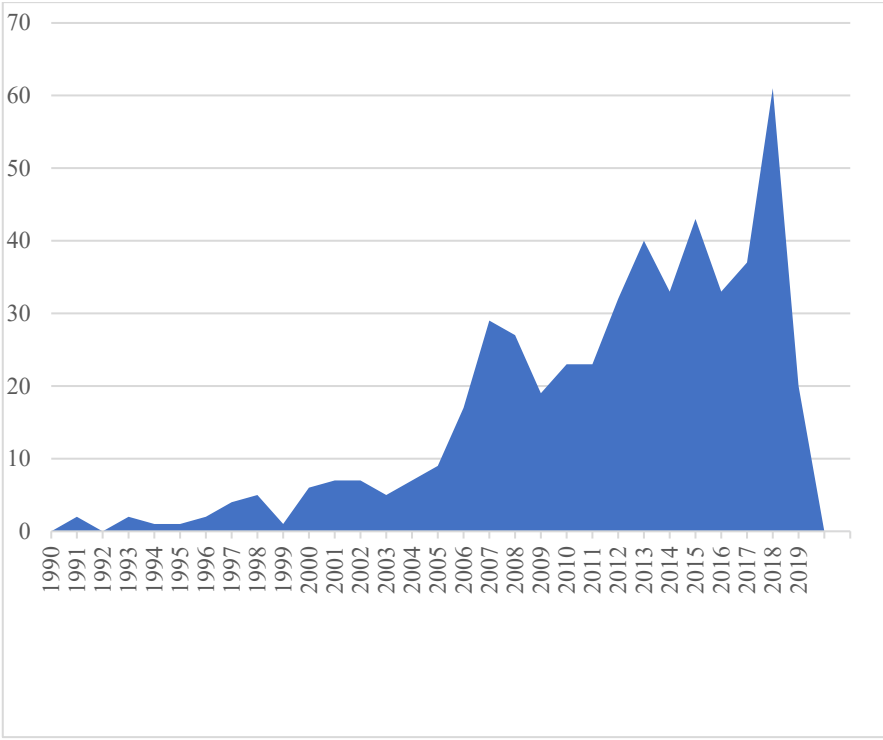
Obviously, the explanation presented is inadequate. Regarding the part of explanation about "necessary basic skills and competencies and the ones required for the students to be successful in higher education, work and daily life," it is not clear how these skills were determined. Concerning this part, although the explanations show what the European and Turkish Qualifications Frameworks were based on, the lack of detailed reports on the operation of the process causes the questioning of the quality of the studies.

Teacher education and teacher education programs should be examined in order to find out the reason why primary and secondary education curricula have not achieved the desired level or gone beyond the vicious circle. As a matter of fact, diverse teacher training models (such as village teacher schools, village institutes, primary education teacher schools, education schools at tertiary level, education institutes, higher teacher schools, girls' technical teacher schools, males' technical teacher schools and, finally, education faculties) have been implemented since the first years of the Republic. However, regarding this issue, which should be discussed in a

separate panel, quality and qualified teacher education programs are still an important priority, not just up until the 2000s.

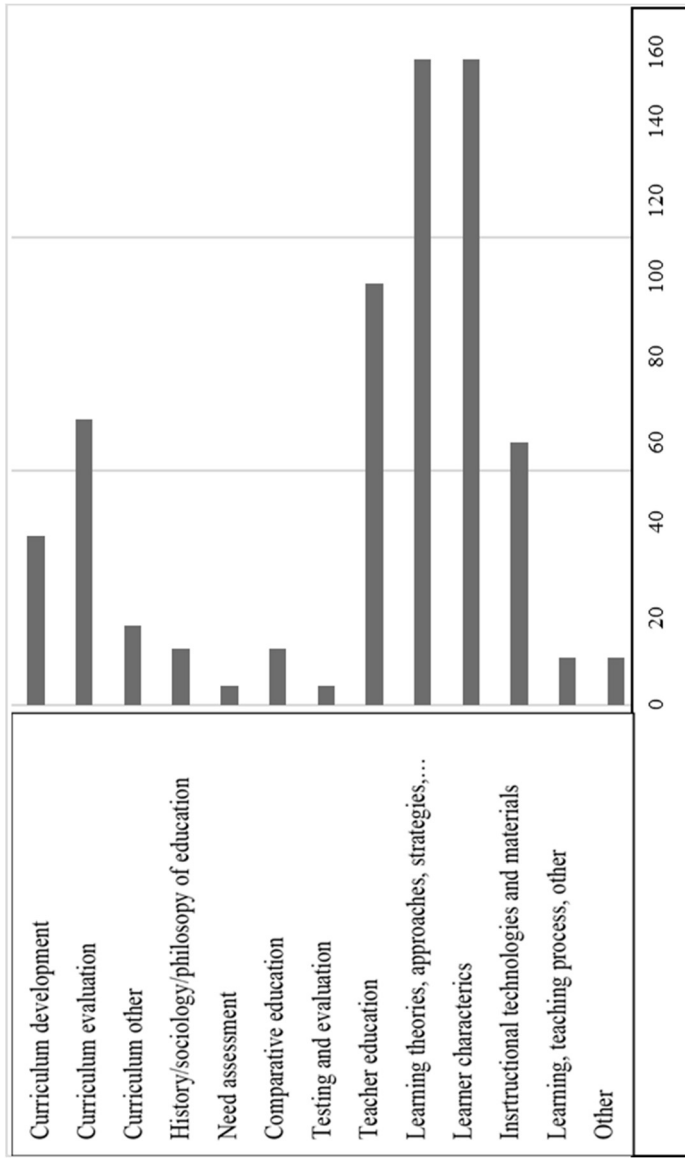
Curriculum development is a continuous and comprehensive process based on scientific foundations and an educational philosophy, and, also, it should be improved by continuous evaluation studies. On the other hand, the practices on curriculum development fall far short of the ideal. Therefore, The Ministry of National Education should abandon the perspective of "curriculum reduced to content" not only conceptually but also by taking the scientific bases into account. It is necessary for the National Ministry of Education to cooperate and collaborate with universities, to consider each study as a resource and to use it in the evaluation process, and to have an understanding of developing curricula free from the policy.

The scientific foundations of curriculum and instruction science in Turkey were established as the results of great effort devoted by two scientists, Fatma Varış and Selahattin Ertürk, who completed their education on curriculum studies abroad and returned to Turkey. After their return, curriculum and instruction became a scientific field at universities, beginning in the 1980s. Scholars working in the field have focused on goal-based curriculum understanding—in other words, needs analysis, design, development process steps or evaluation of the curriculum—and, as a result, they develop curriculum knowledge in the field in this direction. In this regard, a recent study on the PhD dissertations carried out between 1990 and 2019 demonstrates that there are 496 PhD dissertations and they could be retrieved from the national thesis database of Council of Higher Education (yok.gov.tr/en). The distribution of these PhD dissertations according to years is illustrated in Graphic-1.



Graphic-1. The distribution of these PhD dissertations according to years

As seen in the Graphic-1, the number of the dissertations in curriculum and instruction has started to increase significantly since 2007. The year in which the most thesis was published is 2018. Topics covered in these PhD dissertations are shown in the Graphic-2.



Graphic-2. Topics covered in PhD dissertations published in the field of curriculum and instruction in Turkey.