

Students' Civic Knowledge and Perceptions of Civic Concepts in a Private School: A Comparative International Perspective

Özel Bir Okuldaki Öğrencilerin Vatandaşlık Bilgileri ve Vatandaşlık Kavramlarına Ait Algıları: Karşılaştırmalı Uluslararası Bir Bakış

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Abstract

The aim of this study was to provide a descriptive framework for patterns of civic knowledge; attitudes toward democracy and citizenship; and the civic school environment of lower-secondary-school students by examining the case of a private school in Ankara from an international comparative perspective. The student questionnaire utilized in the IEA 1999 Study was adapted and used to collect data from a sample of 196 adolescents attending a private school. In general, Turkish students scored higher than the international mean in terms of civic knowledge related to political rights, the function of laws, free elections and gender discrimination. In addition, when compared to their international counterparts, the Turkish study group appeared to have a more conventional concept of citizenship, with a particularly strong emphasis on secularity.

Keywords: Citizenship education, civic knowledge, democracy, IEA, comparative research.

Öz

Bu çalışmada, ortaokul öğrencilerinin vatandaşlık bilgisi ile demokrasi ve vatandaşlığa yönelik tutumları ile ilgili betimsel bir çerçeve oluşturulmak istenmiştir. Bu bağlamda, Ankara ilinde özel bir okuldaki öğrencilerin kavramsal bilgileri ve tutumları bir durum olarak incelenerek uluslararası karşılaştırmalı bir bakış oluşturulmaya çalışılmıştır. Çalışmada IEA 1999 öğrenci anketi uyarlanarak 196 katılımcıdan veri toplanmıştır. Genel olarak, ortaokula giden Türk öğrencilerinin yasaların işlevlerini, serbest seçimleri ve cinsiyet ayrımcılığı ile ilgili siyasi haklar gibi vatandaşlık kavramlarına yönelik bilgi düzeyleri uluslararası öğrenci verilerine göre daha yüksek bulunmuştur. Ayrıca, uluslararası akranlarına göre, söz konusu okulda Türk öğrencilerinin laiklik vurgusu daha güçlü ve daha geleneksel bir vatandaşlık algısına sahip oldukları ortaya çıkmıştır.

Anahtar sözcükler: Vatandaşlık eğitimi, vatandaşlık bilgisi, demokrasi, IEA, karşılaştırmalı araştırma.

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Introduction

Since the beginning of the 20th Century, citizenship education has been viewed as an important catalyst in raising citizens loyal to the nation-state. Concepts such as democracy, human rights, and citizenship have been part of crucial educational, social, scientific and political discussions both within and across countries, (Cleaver and Nelson, 2006; Crick 2002; Holford and Edirisingha, 2000). This may be attributed to rapid global changes, especially in places such as the republics of the former Soviet Union and Eastern Europe (Saha, 2001), where democratic structures have been developing and evolving and new political and governing structures have been established within the context of the European Union (EU).

Especially at the European political arena, citizenship has become a crucial concept in relation to the formation of EU citizenship out of a highly heterogeneous group of societies (EURYDICE, 2005; Edirisingha, 2000). Since 1995, official documents and reports have emphasized citizenship as the most important tool for achieving integration and building the European Union socially, politically and culturally. Since 1995 several policy actions and implications have been taken to encourage citizenship education at all levels of education and learning in Europe to foster active/participatory citizenship, social inclusion, and democratization. For instance, *Teaching and Learning: towards the Learning Society*, a White Paper issued in 1995; the 1997 report *Accomplishing Europe through Education and Training*; the Treaty of Amsterdam in 1997; the communication issued in 2004 *Building Our Common Future: Policy Challenges and Budgetary Means of the Enlarged Union 2007-2013*, all identified and underlined citizenship education as a priority for EU action the for the development of European citizenship. Furthermore, in 2005, the Council of Europe proclaimed 2005 as the *European Year of Citizenship through Education* in order to promote citizenship education. In another report by EURYDICE entitled *Citizenship Education at School in Europe* (2005), the aim of citizenship education is identified as ensuring that young people “become active and responsible citizens capable of contributing to the development and well-being of the society in which they live” (p. 17). Beyond Europe, international organizations such as UNESCO, through its Decade for Human Rights Education (1995-2004), emphasized the idea of citizenship education on a global scale.

Parallel to the political arena, research in citizenship education also gained momentum especially in the 1990's, and several comparative studies measuring civic knowledge and civic attitudes have been conducted. The largest and long-termed of them is the survey cycles initiated and conducted by the International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement (IEA). First survey on citizenship education, *Civic Education Study*, was conducted in 1971. The second *Civic Education Study* (CIVED), begun in 1999, focused on investigating school experiences in the context of changes that occurred in the ‘real world’ of the political and social life of nations in the early 1990s. The most recent IEA study, the *International Civic and Citizenship Study* (ICCS 2008), investigated the role of schooling in preparing young people for their roles as citizens in society (Schulz et al. 2008). Results of these studies reported differences between countries on students’ knowledge, skills and attitudes in citizenship. The difference was significant especially between the countries with consolidated democracies and those experienced political transitions and turbulences (Torney-Purta et al., 2001). In addition to national differences, individual level differences were found to be related to personal and social backgrounds of students, teaching and learning processes in the classroom, school organization, and features of the educational system (Schulz, 2002; Torney-Purta et al., 2001; Isac et al., 2011, p. 313).

Results of these large-scale studies have enriched our understanding of what youth know about democracy, citizenship, national identity and diversity, as well as their family and school environment regarding civic perceptions and practices not only in Europe but also in several other developing or developed countries. These political and scientific developments have “helped facilitate increased collaboration and sharing of expertise within and across countries and regions” (Schulz et al. 2008, 9), and formed an international environment for citizenship and civic education. These cooperative

efforts have also drawn the borders of a theoretical framework for civic learning and citizenship education.

Theoretical Framework

Since the emergence of the modern nation-states, and public education, schools have been given a crucial role in forming and creating the nation and its citizens, and they have been identified as an indispensable or even the single institution to deliver citizenship education (Green 1997, 9; Kazamias, 2009). An important aspect to note is that schools by themselves are not the sole formal places for citizenship development and citizenship education. Citizenship education is quite complex and happens beyond formal education. It is embedded in a set of interrelated systems and influences and the learning and acquisition of citizenship practices are refined through experience in many kinds of communities and with the influences of mass media (Torney-Purta et al., 2001, p. 177).

The theoretical framework for CIVED study is based on the ecological development theory of Bronfenbrenner (Torney-Purta et al., 2001) in which nested contexts have an impact on the individual through various sources. The ecological civic learning model places the student in the center where he or she is directly influenced by the society through immediate contacts with his or her family, school, peer group, neighbors, and other contexts that the student enters at the micro level. These micro level groups of people, whom are also referred to as socialization agents, are shaped by the broader society, public discourse and by the values they are exposed to. Political, legal, and economic institutions and processes, educational systems, culture, religion, media, socio economic stratification, and social and national values related to history, politics and identity shape the national context for citizenship education and civic learning (Torney-Purta et al., 2001, p. 21). Within this theoretical framework, civic learning can be defined as "the process through which the student, who is encased by family, peers, teachers, school, community, nation, and the world, acquired an understanding and appreciation of the principles, values, attitudes and skills in civic matters" (Lee et al., 2013, pp. 235-236). CIVED studies provided empirical evidence and showed that civic knowledge and civic engagement, were linked to several explanatory factors grouped in four main blocks of predictors: background factors, school factors, mass media, and students' activities out of school (or peer-group activities) (Amadeo et al., 2002, 144). Civic education, from this perspective, requires a multi-layered multi-contextual approach beyond the school/formal education setting. Hence, comparing civic education policy and practices calls for a deeper understanding of the different social, economic, political, religious and educational structures and contexts in each country.

Thus, this article pursues a contextualized comparison between the countries CIVED was conducted and Turkey which was not included in any cycle of the IAE studies.

Turkish Citizenship Education Context

Citizenship education in Turkey has always been addressed in the educational policies since the foundation of the republic in 1923, when the project of modernization was initiated officially. In this project, citizenship was placed in the focal point and developing the new citizens of the state became 'part and parcel of the nation-building process' (Kahraman, 2005, p. 78) and modernization (İçduygu et al., 1999). Thus Turkish citizen, whose characteristics were drawn by the Kemalist elite, became 'both the object of the Kemalist modernization project and its carrier' (Kadioğlu, 1998, p. 7). Atatürk placed citizenship 'at the very core of the legitimacy of the Republic' (İçduygu et al., 1999, p. 187), and with the Law of Unification, which formed the basis of the Turkish education system, citizenship education course was placed in the center of the curriculum as a compulsory course with the aim of promoting the development of republican, nationalist, intellectual and science-oriented Turkish citizens (Salmoni, 2004; Yiğittir, 2007).

Until 1970, citizenship education was taught as a separate course under varying names and in different grades of elementary and lower-secondary classes and with different time allocations. In 1970, the Ministry of National Education (MNE) decided to integrate citizenship education into social sciences courses, and it was taught in this manner until 1985, when it was once again included in the curriculum as a separate course, to be taught in Grade 8. The curriculum was altered somewhat in

1992 and again in 1995, when the MNE revised the curriculum in line with the UN declaration of 1995-2004 as the “Decade for Human Rights Education;” however, the course continued to focus more on citizenship building than on human rights or democratic culture. In 1997, “Human Rights and Citizenship Education” was made a compulsory course for Grade 7, and in 1998, the course was made compulsory for both Grades 7 and 8 one hour weekly.

Especially after the acceptance as a candidate for full membership to the European Union (EU) in 1999, Turkey has continued to follow developments in democracy, human rights and citizenship education by experimenting with dedicated single courses as well as integrating democracy education into multiple courses. Based on these developments, Turkey took an important step in formulating a National Action Plan on citizenship and human rights education, despite some drawbacks in practice. According to the action plan, in addition to a separate compulsory course “Human rights and citizenship education,” students in different grades would receive integrated instruction on civic values, knowledge, skills and attitudes. This approach to citizenship education and focus on human rights was fostered by the Copenhagen Criteria, which underscored the need for each candidate country to achieve stability of institutions guaranteeing democracy, the rule of law, human rights and respect and protection of minorities in order to merit accession to the EU.

Citizenship education continued to be implemented in this manner until 2007, when “Human Rights and Citizenship Education” was removed from the curriculum as a separate course and integrated into other courses again in line with the common approach used in Europe today. As a result of this change, the content, aims, values, attitudes and skills addressed by the citizenship education course have been distributed and diffused into other courses – for the most part Social Sciences, but Life Sciences (primary level), Turkish, Mathematics and Science and Technology as well.

Besides this curricular change, MNE launched a project on democratic citizenship and human rights education with the support of the European Commission in 2009. The project aimed at revising education legislation and redesigning the curriculum of the elective course on EDC/HRE at junior secondary level. It also involved the introduction of “Democracy and Human Rights Education” as an upper secondary elective course as of the 2010-2011 academic year (MNE, 2011). This new programme, prepared in consultation with international experts, aimed to develop a wide range of skills and values, from ‘critical thinking’, ‘creativity’ and ‘problem solving’, to ‘using Turkish effectively’, encouraging ‘participation’, discouraging discrimination, fostering ‘empathy’, and imbuing students with an appreciation of the importance of solidarity, tolerance, responsibility, respect, helpfulness, peace, honor, justice, self-respect, sharing, freedom and equality. In short, a list of ethical qualities associated with model European citizenship were combined with an emphasis on skills of ‘creativity’ and ‘critical thinking’ considered crucial for success in the ‘global knowledge economy.’ While stressing that democracy requires ‘demanding, active and responsible citizens,’ the course also highlighted the importance of patriotism, ‘awareness of cultural heritage,’ and ‘national’ values (Citizenship and Democracy Education Course Programme 2012, p. 5).

MNE enacted a very radical structural reform in 2012 and compulsory education was increased to 12 years with a 4+4+4 model. Within this program, *Human Rights, Citizenship and Democracy* course was planned as a compulsory course for 4th grades 2 hours weekly starting from 2012-2013 instruction year. The new 4th grade course stresses universal values – human rights, active citizenship, diversity, tolerance and the importance of civil society, and features themes such as *every human being is valuable, democracy culture, our rights and freedoms, and our duties and responsibilities*. Although active learning methods are encouraged as a means of reinforcing the importance of active civic participation, rhetoric concerning tradition, ‘duty’ and national values is not entirely abandoned.

All these changes in the structure of the courses to improve citizenship education show that there is an effort to better address the civic knowledge and skills needed for today’s contemporary societies. However, research conducted on citizenship education courses indicate that the changes appear mostly to be structural with the assumption that a change in the curriculum will be sufficient to address the civic skills and understanding that students need may indicate a social movement type of citizenship understanding.

Most of the research conducted on citizenship education in Turkey has focused on the aims of the citizenship education courses; students' attainment in terms of values, skills and attitudes related to citizenship and democracy; views and perceptions of students and teachers on citizenship and democracy education; and content analysis of textbooks. The results these research studies are conflicting. Kepenekçi and Gökçe (2001) found that the majority of students (according to teachers) did not attain a sufficient level of knowledge in terms of human rights and citizenship through the integrated courses on citizenship education. Yiğittir (2007) found that students were able to meet 74% of the aims of the course in terms of cognitive achievement. In this respect, it is important to highlight that most of the aims of the course were cognitive and based on recalling or comprehending specific knowledge.

There have also been studies examining the quality of citizenship education in Turkey. A wide-ranging content analysis conducted as part of a collaborative project between the Turkish Science Academy (TUBA) and the History Foundation (*Tarih Vakfı*) examined the values promoted in the textbooks on citizenship education used in Turkey. Textbooks were found to emphasize democracy and citizenship along with nationalism (Bora 2003), and the depiction of women as teachers and nurses in textbooks was viewed as positive gender discrimination (Boztemur, 2003; Tanrıöver, 2003). However, these studies also found that teachers considered the citizenship and human rights textbooks too information-loaded and unable to meet student needs. Findings of content analyses of textbooks are in line with findings related to social norms and attitudes indicating an emphasis on patriotic and conventional democratic values. Some other recent studies on the citizenship perceptions of university students (Senay, 2008) and teacher candidates (Doğanay, 2009) showed that republican and conventional citizenship conceptualization is still prevalent. Studies by Bozkır (2001), Doğanay and Sarı (2009), and Yılmaz et al. (2009) yielded parallel results showing that Turkish students perceived the most important citizenship duties to be fulfilling responsibilities, complying with the laws, paying taxes, and doing military service, they also thought the most important civic ideals were patriotism, being proud of one's country and nation, and being hardworking are depictions of conventional citizenship. Akar (2010) also indicated that parents with internal migration background living in squatter areas expect schools to help their children develop as 'good' i.e. productive and adaptive citizens rather than support their intellectual growth. These studies illustrate that the practice of citizenship education in Turkey emphasizes 'a model republican citizen concept' which has permeated in almost all systems of the society, from policy level to families and school. Students live and experience this form of citizenship practices in their daily life starting from their home to wider community and media. Moreover, it is obvious that not much has changed since the foundation of the Republic even though much has changed in the political, economic, and social structure in the last 30 years.

The impetus for the current study is twofold. First, Turkey has not participated in any international studies concerning citizenship education, and with the exception of limited data obtained from individual studies there is little empirical information available for international comparisons. Second, although education has been shown to be an important factor in the production of citizenship (Holford and Edirisingha, 2000; Saha, 2001), most research in Turkey has focused on evaluating textbooks, programs or student achievement based on course content rather than on measuring how citizenship and human rights education affects students' actions or attitudes. For these reasons, the current study aimed to provide a descriptive framework for patterns of civic knowledge and attitudes toward democracy and citizenship and the civic school environment of lower secondary school students in a private school in Ankara from an international comparative perspective using descriptive statistics. In that regard we attempted to find answer to the following research question: "What are lower secondary school students' conceptions of civic knowledge, civic school environment, and attitudes towards democracy and citizenship attending a private school in Ankara compared with that of the international IEA mean?"

Method

A survey design was utilized to examine conceptions of civic knowledge, civic school environments and attitudes towards democracy and citizenship in a private school in Ankara, Turkey via the CIVED questionnaire which is a part of the IEA survey. For the comparative part of the study, data from the IEA 1999 Civic Education Study was utilized to provide an international comparative perspective based on descriptive statistics.

Data Sources

The participants comprised of 196 students aged 14-16 years enrolled in Grades 6-8 at a private lower secondary school in Ankara and the study does not aim at generalizing its findings to other private lower secondary schools in Ankara. Rather it aimed at exploring how the civic education school curriculum exposed to students may have impacted their knowledge, attitudes and perceptions of democracy and citizenship compared with that of the international mean. Since the selected school is located within the campus of a state university, the majority of students are children of faculty members, and middle or upper-middle class families, and reveals a greater level of cultural capital backgrounds compared with the majority of students at that age in Turkey with reference to years of schooling currently the mean for Turkey is 6,5 years (HDR 2013). Moreover, the school is known for its extra-curricular activities and participation in the national (Bridge of Civilizations: Anatolia) and international (ECO-Schools) educational projects. The participants of the Turkish study group comprised almost equally of males and females (99 girls and 97 boys). The participants were administered the survey in social studies classes after the approval was given by the school administration and students who were volunteers responded to the questionnaire and were allowed to leave the study anytime they wished to do so. Details about the data collection processes are explained in the following section.

The secondary data that aimed at providing an international comparative perspective was obtained from the 1999 IEA Civic Education study. The 1999 IEA study population comprised of approximately 90,000 nationally representative students aged 14 years from 19 European countries and Australia, Chile, Colombia, Cyprus, Hong Kong (SAR), Russian Federation, and the United States (Torney-Purta et al., 2001).

Data Collection and Analysis

In this study, a questionnaire including the CIVED (1999) questionnaire was utilized. The CIVED questionnaire used in the IEA 1999 Civic Education Study is built on the assumption that there is a common core of topics and concepts that 14-year-olds should understand in participating countries. We provide a brief overview to familiarize the readers with the questionnaire and in the following paragraph we provide details about the questionnaire we adopted for the Turkish study group. Based on this agreement three core international factors were created. These are: (1) *democracy, democratic institutions and citizenship*; 2) *national identity, regional and international relationships*; and 3) *social cohesion and diversity*. These domains were examined with 5 types of items in the survey assessing (a) *knowledge of content*; (b) *skills in interpretation* of material with civic or political content; (c) how students understand *concepts* such as democracy and citizenship; (d) students' *attitudes* (for example, feelings of trust in the government, and (e) students' *current and expected participatory actions* relating to politics. Items related to citizenship perception were grouped in two factors: conventional citizenship and social movement citizenship. So that different types of student perceptions and behaviors relevant within the context of civics and citizenship were distinguished (Torney-Purta et al., 2001).

In the current study the CIVED (1999) questionnaire was utilized after few linguistic and cultural adaptations. For instance, in the original example church was used to describe the separation between the state and church, we added the example mosque to indicate the separation. The questionnaire was translated into Turkish by the translate-retranslate method by two bilingual speakers. Upon the request of the school administration, items touching upon political issues, including separatism, were excluded from the Turkish questionnaire as it was suggested that they

might be in violation of the "Equality and Generality" principle of the Turkish Constitution. The final subscale on classroom climate was not understood by the participants in the piloting process. Therefore, a rating of often, sometimes, rarely, never was replaced respectively instead of "certainly do this, probably do this, probably not do this, certainly not do this." I don't know was excluded from the scale. The value 0 was excluded for both data representing "I don't know." Validity testing such as confirmatory factor analysis was not conducted because of the small sample size ($N=14$) precluded comparability; therefore, the adapted instrument was piloted in order to check for language and surface validity purposes.

The final adapted CIVED questionnaire consisted of three parts that collected information beside basic demographics. More specifically, to measure civic knowledge, perceptions of democracy, and perceptions of citizenship the following scales were used:

a) Conceptions of Civic Knowledge: Consisted of consisted of 9 items, referring to knowledge of content (Type 1) and skills in interpretation (Type 2) in the areas of international organizations and their roles, international legislation in general and students' interpretation of civic knowledge overall. Items can be seen on Table 2 in the results section.

b) Perceptions of Democracy

The Turkish questionnaire includes 23 items compared to 25 items in the original one. The scale measures threats to democracy (for example, political corruption) as well as positive factors (for example, free elections). See Table 3 for all items.

c) Perceptions of Citizenship

Students' perception of citizenship includes 15 items in the original as well as the translated version of the questionnaire. Item ratings are scored as follows: 3.00-3.99: considered important for citizenship; 2.00-2.99: mixed feelings; 1.00-1.99: considered unimportant for citizenship (see Table 4 for all items).

Finally, the survey instrument was administered and collected by the second author in social studies classes. Data analysis was performed using the Educational Statistical Package SPSS.15. Due to the magnitude of the difference between the two datasets (approximately 90,000 for the 1999 IEA CIVED study and ~200 for the Ankara study), comparative analysis was restricted to the use of descriptive statistics. Percentages and/or means from both the CIVED and the Ankara study are provided in the tables included in this report.

Results

The findings from the Turkish study are reported under the following subtitles : Demographics and Home Literacy; Civic Knowledge; Perceptions of Democracy; Perceptions of Citizenship, School Curriculum; and Classroom Climate.

Demographics and Home Literacy

Background demographics showed that students were coming from family environments with higher educational attainments. According to students, 86.8 percent of mothers had completed university, 34.2 percent had Master's Degrees and 10.7 percent had doctorates, while 93.4 percent of fathers had completed university, 44.9 percent had Master's Degrees and 18.9 percent had doctorates, while only 2.6 percent of the fathers and 10.7 percent of the mothers had only a high school degree. Based on the educational level of the parents and number of books at home, it is possible to note that students in this sample had relatively high socio-cultural capital backgrounds (Table 1).

Table 1

Demographics

Education	Mother	Father
Undergraduate	86.6%	93.4%
Graduate	34.2%	44.9%
Post-graduate	10.7%	18.9%

In order to understand their level of engagement at school and community, students were asked about their participation in various organizations and activities. In total, 25.7 percent of students reported to

take part in charitable organizations, 25.5 percent in environmental organizations and 12 percent in human rights organizations. A large number of students also participated in student clubs such as art, music or drama clubs (59.2%) and sports clubs (52%). Many students were found to participate in more than one organization and/or activity at a time, with 7.8 percent of students engaged in these activities every day of the week and 41.5 percent engaged in these activities 1-3 days per week.

CIVED Survey

Conceptions of Civic Knowledge.

Table 2 reveals the conceptions of civic knowledge from a comparative perspective. It can be deduced from the table that the vast majority of students provided correct answers to questions that tested knowledge at the lower levels of the cognitive domain. However, variations in responses were observed with questions measuring higher levels in the cognitive domain, such as Item 8: "Which of the following would most likely cause a government to be called non-democratic?" In this case, about 70 percent of students indicated that this was related to preventing people from criticizing the government, whereas 16 percent saw it as related to paying high taxes. In all the items, percentages of students who gave the correct answer is higher than the international percentage, except only one (item 9). Students have confusions regarding who should govern the country.

Table 2

Conceptions of Civic Knowledge

Choose the answer which you think is correct	N	% of Turkish Study	% International
1. What is the major purpose of the United Nations? <i>Maintaining peace and security among countries.*</i>	171	87.0	85
2. Which of the following is a political right? <i>The right of citizens to vote and stand for [run for] election*</i>	170	86.7	78
3. Which of the following is an accurate statement about laws? <i>Laws forbid or require certain actions [behaviors]*</i>	165	84.2	78
4. A woman who has a young child is interviewed for a job at a travel agency. Which of the following is an example of discrimination [injustice]? She does not get the job because ... <i>she is a mother.*</i>	162	82.7	65
5. In democratic countries what is the function of having more than one political party? <i>To represent different opinions [interests] in the national legislature [e.g. Parliament, Congress]*</i>	160	81.6	75
6. In a democratic country [society] having many organizations for people to join is important because this provides ... <i>opportunities to express different points of view*</i>	156	79.6	69
7. Which of the following is most likely to happen if a large publisher buys many of the [smaller] newspapers in a country? <i>There will be less diversity of opinions presented*</i> <i>Government censorship of the news is more likely**</i>	139 37	70.9 18.9	57
8. Which of the following is most likely to cause a government to be called non-democratic? <i>People are prevented from criticizing [not allowed to criticize] the government*</i> <i>People must pay very high taxes**</i>	133 32	67.9 16.3	53
9. In a democratic political system, which of the following ought to govern the country? <i>Popularly elected representatives*</i> <i>Experts on government and political affairs**</i>	92 89	46.9 43.9	71

*Correct answers

** Answer with the second highest response rate

N= the number of subjects that responded to the item.

% of correct answers for the Turkish study group only.

% of international correct answers for international study group overall.

Perceptions of Democracy

In this section, we explored students' perceptions of how they see the threats to democracy as well as the positive factors of being in a democracy. Mean scores for international and Turkish students are similar with the exceptions of Items 1 (freedom of expression), 4 (secularism), 7 (free voice of newspaper) and 12 (Refuse to obey violation of human rights), for which Turkish means were higher, and Items 8 (income levels), 9 (protest right), and 13 (income gap), for which Turkish means were lower.

Table 3

Democracy Perception

What is GOOD or BAD for democracy	Very good + Somewhat good	Somewhat bad + Very bad	SD	Mean	International Mean
	%	%			
1. When everyone has the right to express their opinions freely.	97%	2%	.55	3.80	3.41
2. When many different organizations [associations] are available [exist] for people who wish to belong to them.	64.2%	11.2%	1.54	3.39	3.14
3. When citizens have the right to elect political leaders freely.	82.6%	7.7%	1.24	3.29	3.43
4. When there is a separation [segregation] between the church/mosque [institutional mosque or church and the state [government].	79.6%	7.7%	1.34	3.29	2.27
5. When people demand their political and social rights.	78.6%	9.2%	1.34	3.13	2.97
6. When political parties have rules that support women to become political leaders.	74.5%	11.7%	1.43	2.94	3.07
7. When newspapers are free of all government [state, political] control.	70.4%	15.3%	1.43	2.84	2.33
8. When a minimum income [living standard] is assured for everyone.	71.5%	9.2%	1.35	2.76	3.03
9. When people peacefully protest against a law they believe to be unjust.	68.9%	10.2%	1.57	2.76	3.07
11. When political parties have different opinions [positions] on important issues.	69.4%	7.2%	1.49	2.55	2.57
12. When people refuse to obey a law which violates human rights.	57%	26.1%	1.53	2.51	2.08
13. When differences in income and wealth between the rich and the poor are small.	64.3%	11.2%	1.54	2.46	2.70

Scale values are "Very good for democracy=rating 4; somewhat good for democracy= rating 3; somewhat bad for democracy=2; Very bad for democracy=1; "0"= don't know is not excluded.

Perceptions of Citizenship

Students' perception of citizenship was measured using a 15-item list as in the original scale that was scored as follows: 3.00-3.99: considered important for citizenship; 2.00-2.99: mixed feelings; 1.00-1.99: considered unimportant for citizenship. As Table 4 shows, Turkish and international students had more or less a similar understanding of what it means to be a 'good citizen. Obeying the law and being loyal to country as well as voting and knowing the history are among the most important attributes of a good citizen. It is clearly seen from the results that obeying the law is quite

dominant since they were confused about ignoring a law that violated human rights. Results indicate that students in our sample have a mixed perception of citizenship fed from both conventional and social-movement-related citizenship.

Table 4
Citizenship Perception

	Very important + Somewhat important	Somewhat unimportant + Not important			
An adult who is a good citizen ...	B %	A %	SD	Mea n	Intern ational Mean
1. obeys the law	95,4	1	.71	3.65	3.65
2. is patriotic and loyal [devoted] to the country	90,3	1	1.02	3.49	3.20
3. votes in every election ^a	89,3	4,6	.97	3.39	3.12
4. knows about the country's history ^a	83,1	8,6	1.03	3.16	2.96
5. takes part in activities to protect the environment	82,7	6,6	1.11	3.15	3.15
6. participates in activities to benefit people in the community ^b	84,7	5,1	1.09	3.13	3.13
7. takes part in activities promoting human rights ^b	82,7	7,1	1.14	3.10	3.24
8. works hard	81,7	9,7	1.06	3.08	3,13
9. follows political issues in the newspaper, on the radio or on TV ^a	80,6	10,2	1.11	3.02	3,18
10. would participate in a peaceful protest against a law believed to be unjust ^b	75,5	8,2	1.35	2.94	2,83
11. would be willing to serve in the military to defend the country	72,5	47,8	1.28	2.88	3,18
12. shows respect for government representatives [leaders, officials] ^a	71,4	13,3	1.27	2.76	2,89
13. engages in political discussions ^a	47,5	35,7	1.27	2.30	2,37
14. joins a political party ^a	33,2	51,6	1.11	2.08	2,11
15. would be willing to ignore [disregard] a law that violated human rights	35,8	34,1	1.56	1.79	2,86

a: refers to conventional citizenship for the Turkish case

b: refers to social-movement-related citizenship for the Turkish case.

Scale values are, "Very important= 4 + somewhat important= 3; somewhat unimportant=2+ Not important=1; "0" = don't know is excluded.

School Curriculum

Students were also asked about what they had learned in school in relation to citizenship. As Table 5 shows, Turkish curriculum is different from the international curricula in several aspects. While international students were more exposed to learning environments in which cooperation in groups with others and being concerned about what happens in other countries were discussed, students in the private school were more emphasizing conventional citizenship through votes in elections as obedient citizens, and reveal patriotism and loyalty and also has knowledge about their countries' history.

Table 5
School Curriculum

<i>In school I have learned</i>	Turkish Strongly agree+agree in %	<i>SD</i>	<i>Mean</i>	Int. Strongly agree+agree in %	<i>International SD</i>	<i>Int Mean</i>
1. to co-operate [work together] in groups with other students	79.1	1.14	3.04	91	.654	3.23
2. to understand people who have different ideas	77.6	1.14	2.95	84	.713	3.02
3. to be a patriotic and loyal [committed] citizen of my country	77.6	1.18	3.13	64	.872	2.79
4. how to act to protect the environment	71.9	1.23	2.94	79	.770	3.00
5. to contribute to solving problems in the community [society]	70.5	1.24	2.82	68	.773	2.82
6. about the importance of voting in national and local elections	69.4	1.31	2.78	55	.914	2.62
7. to be concerned about what happens in other countries	64.3	1.25	2.67	72	.794	2.86

*Given percentages are the addition of (strongly agree+ agree). The rest relates to disagree (2), strongly disagree (1), 0 (Don't know) is excluded in the calculation. *Abbreviation 'Int.' refers to international.

Discussion and Conclusions

This study showed that Turkish students in our sample shared similar notions of democracy and citizenship, and similar levels of civic knowledge with the students from 1999 IEA CIVED Study on account of little differences. Both Turkish and international students had a fairly adequate knowledge base regarding basic notions of democracy and citizenship in terms of content (Torney-Purta et al., 2001). Turkish students were also found to have a higher rate of correct answers regarding knowledge of political rights, the function of laws, free elections and gender discrimination than their international counterparts in general. This shows that, according to civic knowledge scale (Schulz, Fraillon and Ainley, 2011), our sample scored well at level 1 and 2 that are mechanistic knowledge of operations and institutions and understanding of the main civic and citizenship institutions, systems and concepts. However, Turkish students scored lower on items measuring parents and home environment, the effects of citizenship education and knowledge regarding who is responsible for governing. In comparison to international results, the students in the private school placed a greater emphasis on secularism than their international counterparts and the mean score is one point higher, which can be associated with loyalty to the principles of the Republic of Turkey and see secularism as a crucial issue in a democratic system. This finding is compatible with the strong emphasis on secularism in the Turkish Constitution, which suggests that the ultimate aim of education is the development of generations of Turkish citizens who respect "secular, democratic and national values." As outlined in Turkey's National Education Law No. 1739, education in Turkey is expected to be "national," "republican," "secular," "have a scientific foundation," "incorporate generality and equality" and "be functional and modern." In other words, education aims to promote ideal citizens who might fit the description of Plato's "virtuous citizen." Given the findings, we can conclude that the citizenship education offered at the private school fits with Plato's virtuous citizenship description.

Also, the students in the Turkish private school scored lower on the item "would be willing to ignore [disregard] a law that violated human rights. The international mean was relatively higher. This may indicate that the students' in the private school view that the Turkish Law does not reflect a violation of human rights and reflects the principle of equality and generality, yet, through more in-depth research we may shed light on why students rated low on that score compared with the international mean.

Turkish students and the students who participated in the international study had somewhat different perceptions of citizenship even though certain areas were seen very similar to CIVED results. Obeying the law is also the most important attribute of the good adult citizen for our sample followed by voting in elections which is also seen as important. In many countries, including Turkey, young people believe that joining a political party and discussing political issues are of little importance. Turkish students have a mixed concept of citizenship. Although our Turkish sample showed a more conventional view of citizenship overall, they also exhibited perceptions of citizenship in terms of “social action” in their responses related to environmental protection, community participation, and protection of human rights. When responses of international students were examined, a mixed view of conventional and social action perceptions of citizenship were found among students in Colombia, Cyprus, Greece, while citizenship was perceived as “social action” in Belgium, the Czech Republic, Denmark, England, Estonia and Finland (IEA 1999). It is significant from data that patriotism is part of the outcomes of civic learning in Turkey and part of the civic teaching which can be rooted back both to the families and as well as to the citizenship curriculum and practices that promote republican citizenship values since the foundation of the republic (Keser Aschenberger, 2014). This is contrary to some countries such as UK where patriotism is taught as a controversial issue and teachers do not feel comfortable about teaching it (Hand and Pierce 2011).

With regard to perceptions of democracy, compared with another study (Doganay, 2010) conducted with 14 years old Turks, students in our sample showed a better understanding of democracy in almost all items. Doganay’s study showed that students were perplexed when it came to certain aspects of democracy such as political parties’ different ideas or media being free from government control or even about women’s rights. He also found significant differences among students’ understanding of democracy based on parents’ education level and perceived SES level. In other words, the higher the parents’ education level, the better the democracy understanding of students is. These significant differences can be explained with both the school and home environment. In Doganay’s study 54.7% of the mothers and 36.6% of the fathers were graduates of 5-year elementary schools while only 10% of the fathers and 4.6% of the mothers completed undergraduate degrees, which may reflect the general profile of parents for children at that age. Consequently, the impact of high education levels and higher cultural capital levels of parents, and features of home environment have been clearly observed in this study compared to findings with parents with lower levels of education backgrounds.

Given that the aim of education in Turkey is to maintain a continuum of strong democratic values, and given that democracy is fundamentally based on an equality that addresses a commitment to collective solidarity (Salmoni, 2004), it should not come as a surprise that the school curriculum has mainly focused on the republican model of citizenship for the promotion of the common good (Keyman and İcduygu, 1998). In 2005, however, a paradigm shift in the Turkish Education occurred with the adoption of a constructivist curriculum, which included the diffusion of citizenship education among various humanities and social sciences courses until 2011, in which citizenship once again is taught in a single course on democracy and human rights (MNE 2010). Within this framework, the concept of Europeanism, i.e. allowing “values deriving from the inner nature and logic of Europeanism and youth to really manifest and strengthen each other” (Kariko, 2009, p. 88) is included in Turkish citizenship education. Salmoni (2003) described these multiple aims as the ‘convergence of modernization and Turkish nationalism’ (p.103), while Çayır and Gürkaynak, (2008) and Kadioğlu (1996) characterized this process as a ‘paradox of modernization and nation formation.’ Furthermore, Kadioğlu (1996) identified this contradiction between the modernization and creating a distinctive Turkish culture as a burden and a ‘difficult task of achieving a balance’ (p. 178) between the two. This paradox reflected itself in the conceptualization of Turkish citizenship and education as well. Results of this and other studies cited show that education and citizenship education significantly have created a strong sense of national identity based on republican citizenship ideals and values up to today when these ideals are challenged by the global movements at the macro level, and ideological, political and social movements at the national level.

Learning about citizenship is a complex and unending process that begins at a very early age and continues throughout life. The link between formal education and citizenship has been widely discussed, and most studies have concluded that "the introduction of mass public education was certainly a key element in the emergence of modern citizenship, as it provides a foundation for informed participation and integration" (Learning for Active Citizenship Report 2005, p. 6). As Campbell (2005) states, "civic education is at the root of the historical rationale for the massive investment made in the nation's schools" (p. 2). Such statements make it obvious that citizenship education aims to go beyond providing cognitive knowledge to secure effective and pragmatic outcomes, namely, a democratic nation with respect for human rights. As Lawson (2001) put it, citizenship education has to do with the link between academic learning and the acquisition of essential, active citizenship skills by young people. Although attempts may continue to identify a "right" way of implementing citizenship education, there is still no answer to the question as to how the school environment may best help learners to internalize the skills, behaviors and attitudes of a democratic citizen. As Gündoğdu and Yıldırım (2010) have suggested, perhaps the best way to safeguard democracy is to begin educating children at a very early age to provide them with the essential skills for democracy and to help them become cultural and social agents. There is research which reveals that even the parents of the children coming from disadvantaged backgrounds and attending schools that are located in migrant neighborhoods want their children to be raised as obedient citizens to the state (Akar, 2010). This brings us to the ecological civic learning where impact of all social, economic and political actors was taken into account especially in a democratic country. It is largely agreed that a clear understanding of democracy and democratic participation can only be achieved through practice and experience (Flutter and Rudduck, 2004; Jenklınk, 2009; Lambert 2009). Following Dewey's (1916) democracy conceptualization, schools that are guided by democratic ideals are places where students live, experience and practice democracy through the use of 'voice', and places where democracy is "empowered by open communication" (Jenklınk, 2009, p. 277). Thus, transforming schools into a place of shared democratic experience where students internalize democracy and perceive it as a way of living, not a form of government (Dewey 1916), calls upon a change in the way we see students/children; students, then, are recognized "not as citizens-in-training, but citizens-in-fact as participating members of our social and political community" (Lambert, 2009, p. 125). Turkey, as being in the process of democratization, is required to provide all the necessary conditions for not only a solid understanding of the concept of democracy and social action citizenship, but also democratic participation and active citizens in the schools in addition to all other social institutions.

Although the findings of the current study indicate that the Turkish students' civic development through the school curriculum, either formal or non-formal, is satisfactory when compared on an international basis, it is important to highlight that the students who participated belong to a select, middle or upper-SES group that does not reflect the overall Turkish child population of fourteen year olds. For instance, currently only slightly more than half of the adult Turkish population have completed a secondary education, and the mean of years of schooling for adults is at the moment is 6,5 years (HDR 2013), whereas the majority of the parents of the students who participated in this study had completed their tertiary education and reflect a high cultural capital. For this reason, the conclusions drawn from this study should not be generalized to refer to this specific population.. Another important limitation is that in the Turkish dataset the rating "0 = I don't know" was excluded from the scale. This may likely have positively influenced the scores compared to the international results. Nevertheless, we decided not to manipulate the international data and utilized only the values as reported. Consequently, it is strongly suggested that this study be replicated among student populations that are more representative of Turkey as a whole in order to allow for comparability on an international scale and also conduct an international comparative study excluding the rating value "I don't know" from the study to overcome the limitations in this study as listed above. Specific issues to be addressed by future research could include differences between perspectives of Turkish children aged 14-15 attending private and public schools regarding

democracy and citizenship; how the use of textbooks whose content reflect less conventional perceptions of citizenship would affect student perceptions; the influence of school culture, teachers' attitudes and beliefs, and family culture on students' perceptions of citizenship and democracy; and the role of teacher education programs in building awareness about citizenship rights and responsibilities and human rights. Finally, a comparative study to be conducted with countries regarded to possess stronger and/or weaker democracies than Turkey could help to assess how today's youth view citizenship, citizenship education and democracy overall.

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Geniş Özet

Özel Bir Okuldaki Öğrencilerin Vatandaşlık Bilgileri ve Vatandaşlık Kavramlarına Ait Algıları: Karşılaştırmalı Uluslararası Bir Bakış

Demokrasi, insan hakları ve vatandaşlık gibi kavramlar ülkelerin gelecekleri açısından eğitim, toplum, bilim ve politik tartışmaların içinde önemli bir yer tutmaktadır (Nelson 2006; Crick 2002; Saha 2001; Holford ve Edirisingha 2000). Yirminci yüzyılın başından bu yana, özellikle hızlı küresel değişiklikler bağlamında, demokratik yapıları geliştirmek ve gelişen yeni siyasi ve yönetsel yapıları güçlendirmek amacıyla, örneğin ulus devlet oluşturma sürecinde veya Avrupa Birliği örneğinde, vatandaşlık eğitimi, örtük ya da formel, ders programı olarak eğitim sistemleri içinde önemli bir yere sahip olmuştur.

Modern ulus devlet ve zorunlu genel eğitimin ortaya çıkmasından bu yana okullara vatandaş oluşturma ya da şekillendirme amacına yönelik önemli roller verilmiş ve okullar bu konularda eğitim sunmak için vazgeçilmez tek kurum olarak belirlenmiştir (Green, 1997; Kazamias, 2009). Vurgulanması gereken başka bir önemli unsur da okulların vatandaşlık geliştirme ve vatandaşlık eğitimi veren tek resmi kurum olmadığıdır. Vatandaşlık eğitimi oldukça karmaşıktır ve örgün eğitimle olduğu kadar yaygın eğitimle de verilebilir. Birçok farklı toplumda, kitle iletişim araçları ve İnternet gibi modern teknolojilerle de vatandaşlık eğitimi sağlanmaktadır (Torney-Purta v.d., 2001).

Türkiye'de vatandaşlık eğitimi, Cumhuriyetin kuruluşunda başlatılan modernizasyon projesinin en önemli araçlarından biri olarak kullanılmış ve günümüze kadar da eğitim politikalarında ulus devlet oluşturma ve bu devletin yeni vatandaşlarını şekillendirme bağlamında oldukça etkili olmuştur (İçduygu v.d. 1999; Kahraman, 2005). Türk vatandaşlığı, modernizasyon projesi içerisinde Kemalist elit ilkeler ışığında tanımlanmıştır (Kadioğlu, 1998). Bu proje bağlamında Atatürk de vatandaşlık kavramının özünde Cumhuriyeti meşrulaştırır (İçduygu v.d. 1999, 187). Tevhidi Tedrisat Kanunu'yla temelleri atılan Türk eğitim sisteminin o dönemde en önemli derslerinden biri olan vatandaşlık eğitimi ders programının amacı da cumhuriyetçi, milliyetçi, entelektüel ve bilim odaklı Türk vatandaşları yetiştirmek olarak belirlenmiş ve amaca uygun olarak da uzun süre zorunlu ders olarak okutulmuştur (Yiğittir 2007). O tarihten bu yana, ulusal ve uluslararası gelişmeler vatandaşlık eğitimi programını, ders içeriğini ve ders adını dahi etkilemiştir. Bu bağlamda, Cumhuriyetin kurulmasından 90 yıl sonra, günümüzde vatandaşlık eğitiminin durumunu ve öğrencilere kazandırdıklarını incelemek vatandaşlık eğitimine ışık tutmak oldukça önemlidir, özellikle de küresel vatandaşlıktan söz edildiği, vatandaşlık değerlerinin ve sınırlarının hızla değiştiği dünyada karşılaştırmalı bir sunum sağlamak açısından. Bu kapsamda, bu çalışma ile Türkiye'de ortaokul öğrencilerinin vatandaşlık kavramlarına ilişkin bilgilerini, demokrasi ve demokratik vatandaşlık algılarını ve içinde bulundukları okul iklimini, IEA 1999 araştırma sonuçları ile karşılaştırmalı olarak incelemek amaçlanmıştır.

1999 IEA çalışmasının evreni 19 Avrupa ülkesinden ve Avustralya, Şili, Kolombiya, Kıbrıs, Hong Kong, Rusya Federasyonu ve Amerika Birleşik Devletleri'nden 14 yaşlarında yaklaşık 90.000 katılımcı öğrenciden oluşmaktadır (Torney-Purta v.d. 2001). Bu katılımcı grubuna ait veriler CİVED (Vatandaşlık Eğitimi) (1999) anketine dayalı veri tabanından yararlanarak analiz edilmiştir ve uluslararası ve karşılaştırmalı bir bakış elde etmek amacıyla daha çok betimsel bulgulardan yararlanılmıştır. Türkiye Cumhuriyeti'ndeki örneklem Ankara'da özel bir okulda 6. 7. ve 8. sınıflarda eğitim alan 196 öğrenciden oluşmaktadır.

Seçilen özel okul bir devlet üniversitesi kampüs yerleşkesi içinde yer almaktadır ve öğrencilerin bir kısmı öğretim üyelerinin çocukları ya da orta/ üst düzey gelire sahip ailelerin çocuklarından oluşmaktadır. Bu nedenle örneklemdeki öğrenciler ülke genelindeki benzer yaş grubuna göre daha fazla kültürel sermayeye sahiptir ve veriler genelleme amacı gütmemektedir. Ayrıca, okul program dışı faaliyetler ve ulusal (Medeniyetler Köprüsü: Anadolu) ve uluslararası (Eko-okullar) eğitim

projelerine aktif katılımlarıyla bilinmektedir. Türkiye'deki örneklem hemen hemen eşit sayıda kızlardan ve erkeklerden ($n = 99$ kız ve $n = 97$ erkek) oluşmaktadır.

CIVED anketindeki sorular, 14 yaş grubunun ülkelerinde anlamaları/bilmeleri gerektiği düşünülen ortak bir kavramlar listesi olduğu varsayımı üzerine inşa edilmiştir. Üç temel uluslararası kavramsal alan oluşturulmuştur. Bunlar, (a) *demokrasi, demokrasi kurumları ve vatandaşlık*; (b) *ulusal kimlik, bölgesel ve uluslararası ilişkiler ve (c) sosyal uyum ve çeşitlilik* bölümlerinden oluşmaktadır. Bu alanlar 5 türde maddeyle değerlendirilmiştir (a) içeriğe ait bilgi; (b) toplumsal ve politik içerikli materyallerin yorumlanması becerileri; (c) öğrencilerin demokrasi ve vatandaşlık gibi kavramları nasıl anladıkları algısı; (d) öğrencilerin tutumları (örneğin, devlete ve siyasetçilere güven); (e) öğrencilerin mevcut ve öngörülen aktif siyasi durumlara katılımları. Bu maddelerden, vatandaşlık algıları ile ilgili olanlar, *geleneksel vatandaşlık ve toplumsal eylemci vatandaşlık* olarak iki faktöre ayrılmıştır (Torney-Purta v.d., 2001).

Bulgular, Türkiye'deki öğrencilerin geleneksel vatandaşlık algıları taşıdıklarını göstermektedir. Ancak uluslararası sonuçları ile karşılaştırıldığında, örneklemimizdeki Türk öğrencilerinin akranlarına göre laiklik üzerinde daha fazla vurgu yaptıkları görülmüştür. Bu bulgu, çalışmanın yapıldığı okulda Türk eğitim sisteminin temel amaçlarından biri olan laikliğin öğrencilere doğru bir şekilde aktarıldığını göstermektedir. Başka deyişle, "laik, demokratik ve ulusal değerlere saygılı nesillerin geliştirilmesi" öğrencilerin vatandaşlık algı ve tanımlamalarında açıkça ortaya çıkmaktadır. Dolayısıyla, örgün eğitimin bilgi ve tutum düzeyinde de olsa, laiklik açısından hedefine ulaştığını iddia edebiliriz. Aynı şekilde, Türkiye Cumhuriyeti'nin Milli Eğitim Kanunu'nun 1739 maddesine göre Türkiye'de eğitim "Ulusaldır" ve "laiktir, bilimseldir, genellik ve eşitlik temeline dayanır, işlevsel ve modernidir". Bu duruma göre, incelediğimiz okulda vatandaşlık eğitimi programının Plato'nun ideal vatandaşlık kavramına uygun bireyler yetiştirdiği söylenebilir. Türkiye'de eğitimin amacının güçlü demokratik değerlerin sürdürülebilir olmasını sağlamak ve temelde eşitliğe dayalı bir sistem olması göz önünde bulundurulduğunda (Salmoni, 2004), bizim çalışmamızda ortaya çıkan eğitim programlarının toplum menfaati için cumhuriyete iyi vatandaş yetiştirme modeline vurgu yapması bizi şaşırtmamalıdır (Keyman ve İçduygu, 1998). Gündoğdu ve Yıldırım'ın (2010) önerdikleri gibi, demokrasiyi korumak adına, demokrasinin sürdürülebilirliği için gereken temel beceri, kültürel ve sosyal değerleri daha iyi kazandırmak için çok daha erken bir yaşta çocuklar eğitilmelidirler ve vatandaşlık eğitiminin bu çerçevedeki rolü iyi anlaşılmalı ve uygulanmalıdır.