



## TÜRKİYE'DE HAYAT BİLGİSİ DERSİ ÖĞRETİM PROGRAMLARINDA ÇOCUKLARIN KATILIM HAKKI: TARİHSEL BİR ANALİZ

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**Öz**

Çocukların katılım hakkı (ÇKH) ile ilgili bilgi ve beceri kazandırmaya yönelik düzenlemeler yapılan öğretim programlarından biri ilkököl hayat bilgisi dersi öğretim programıdır. Bu araştırmada Türkiye’de BM çocuk hakları sözleşmesi yürürlüğe girdiği tarihten itibaren günümüze kadar hazırlanan hayat bilgisi dersi öğretim programlarında ÇKH için yapılan düzenlemelerin karşılaştırmalı olarak incelenmesi amaçlanmıştır. Nitel bir araştırma olan çalışmada doküman analizi yöntemi kullanılmıştır. 1968, 1998, 2005 ve 2015 programlarına ilişkin yazılı veriler içerik analiz yapılarak çözümlenmiştir. Analiz sonucunda, hayat bilgisi dersi öğretim programlarında ÇKH ile ilgili 11 kategoriye ulaşılmıştır. Araştırma sonuçları, Türkiye’de BM çocuk hakları sözleşmesi yürürlüğe girdiğinde uygulamada olan 1968 programında da ÇKH bağlamında değerlendirilebilecek çeşitli düzenlemelere vurguda bulunulduğunu göstermiştir. Ancak, çocukların görüşlerini ifade etmelerine ilk kez 1998 programında yani BM çocuk hakları sözleşmesi yürürlüğe girdikten sonra yer verildiğini ortaya koymuştur. Araştırma, Türkiye’de BM çocuk hakları sözleşmesi yürürlüğe girdikten sonra hayat bilgisi dersi öğretim programlarında gerçekleştirilen değişim ve gelişim hareketleriyle ÇKH ilgili nelerin nasıl değiştiği ya da değişmeden kaldığı ile ilgili bilgi sağlaması açısından önem taşımaktadır. .

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** Çocukların katılım hakkı, çocuk hakları eğitimi, hayat bilgisi dersi öğretim programı, program geliştirme.

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## CHILDREN'S PARTICIPATION RIGHTS IN THE LIFE SCIENCES CURRICULA IN TURKEY: A HISTORICAL ANALYSIS

### **Abstract**

*The life sciences curriculum is one of the curricula in which some arrangements can be made with regard to the cultivation of knowledge and skills pertaining to children's participation rights (CPR). In this research, it was aimed at investigating the arrangements made concerning CPR in the life sciences curricula starting from the date that the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child was put into effect in Turkey until now from a comparative perspective. The document analysis method was employed in this qualitative research. The printed data regarding the 1968, 1998, 2005 and 2015 curricula were analyzed through content analysis. As a result of the analysis, a total of 11 categories about CPR emerged in the life sciences curricula. The results of the research revealed that various arrangements, which can be considered within the framework of CPR in the 1968 curriculum being implemented when the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child was put into effect in Turkey, were emphasized. However, it was found out that children's expression of their thoughts was involved in the 1998 curriculum for the first time after the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child was put into effect. The research is significant in that it provides information about what has changed or remained the same about CPR with the change and development movements implemented in the life sciences curriculum after the enactment of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child in Turkey.*

**Keywords:** *Children's participation rights, children's rights education, the life sciences curriculum, curriculum development.*

### **1. INTRODUCTION**

Children's participation right is a right which was included in the Convention on the Rights of the Child for the first time and was not previously covered in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the Declaration of the Rights of the Child (Flowers, 2007). The Article 12 of the Convention on the right to participation proposes that each child who has the ability to come up with an opinion should be provided with the right to freely express his/her opinions about all of the issues concerning him/her based on his/her age and maturity

level. Moreover, it accords the right to children to voice their opinions in any legal or administrative proceeding concerning them. This encompasses a wide spectrum which ranges from court trials to official decision processes which may affect children. For example, decisions about education, health, planning and environment fall into this scope (Hodgkin & Newell, 1998). The Article 13 of the Convention entitles children's freedom of expression; the Article 14 entitles the freedom of thought, religion, and consciousness; the Article 15 entitles the freedom to establish an association; the Article 17 entitles access to information; the Article 23 entitles special support for the disabled children; the Article 29 entitles the optimum development of each child and cultivation of the required abilities, skills, and values for a democratic life; and lastly the Article 31 entitles children's rights to participate in games, entertainments, cultural and artistic life. The Convention serves an invaluable tool for those who want to support children as beings who deserve more participation and are independent and thinking (Hart, 2016). CPR is highly significant for the cultivation of democratic values in children and for their being citizens who use their right to participate in the society in the future (Obradovich & Mastern, 2007). In addition, CPR has been considered as a critical factor in increasing students' academic achievement and commitment to the school. In this sense, the reason behind many students' underachievement and leaving schools is accepted to be the ignorance of their views and deprivation of their right to participation. Besides this, a classroom or school culture in which children participate is rarely observed around the world. Authoritative, segregationist or prone to violence schooling is seen in many countries. This situation prevents students from expressing their opinions and others from listening to them (Lansdown, 1994). According to Hammarberg (2012), CPR is one of children's rights which cannot be ensured in practice. This requires conducting studies regarding the application of CPR. In the related literature, various studies have

been conducted on CPR (Arbrioux, 1998; Butler & Williamson, 1996; Gilleece & Cosgrove, 2012; Hart, 2016; John, 1996; Karaman-Kepenekçi & Aslan, 2011; Meray, 2012; Nayır & Karaman-Kepenekçi, 2011; Reddy & Ranta, 2002; Roche, 1999; Synodi, 2014; Thomas, 2007). Gilleece and Cosgrove (2012) examined the civic participation level of female and male students at schools in Italy. Hart (2016) identified eight phases which encompass processes including the one in which adults are leaders and children are voluntary participants and the whole process that students form and adults are supportive of it in his model likened to a ladder. In Sheir’s (2001) model on CPR, five phases are specified, which range from the first one which covers only listening to children’s opinions to a process in which children share authority and responsibilities about decision-making. John (1996) likens participation to a bridge and identifies three supportive mechanisms incorporating responsibility, solidarity, and participation. Habashi, Driskill, Lang, & DeFalco (2010) attempted to investigate the constitutions of 179 member countries of the United Nations in terms of children’s right to live, protection and participation. Bruyere (2010) made some inferences about how children are affected by actively participating in social environments within the framework of CRP. Moore and Kirk (2010) searched children’s and youngsters’ participation in the decision-making processes in a sound way through reviewing the literature. Smith (2007) examined applied research via a literature review. Özyıldırım (2007) investigated classroom teachers’ views and suggestions for primary school students’ using the right to participation. Nayır and Karaman-Kepenekçi (2011) attempted to reveal to what level CRP was included in primary school Turkish coursebooks from a comparative perspective. Karaman-Kepenekçi and Aslan (2011) examined the research on preschool juvenile literature in terms of children’s rights in Turkey. One of the rights examined was CPR. In Meray’s (2012) study, the level of incorporating CRP in social studies coursebooks was investigated by comparing

Turkey and the US. Öztürk, Topçu, and Eren (2017) examined the human rights, citizenship, and democracy coursebook within the framework of CPR. When these studies are examined, it can be noted that the studies investigating printed documents about the courses in terms of CPR have an important place in the related literature. These studies are significant because they provide information about the arrangements pertaining to the right to participation in different courses and their quality. The life sciences course is one of the courses in which children's rights education is offered at primary school level. Therefore, it may be suggested that it is significant to examine the life sciences curricula in order to obtain information about the arrangements pertaining to CRP at primary school level. Examining the life sciences curricula from a historical perspective can provide detailed information about the quality, development and change process of CRP at primary school level in Turkey. Historical bases are of importance to enlighten current pedagogies, implementing more quality practices by focusing on past experiences and the quality of these practices, unearthing past and present problems clearly and developing comprehensive solutions (Lambdin & Walcott, 2007; Ornstein & Hunkinks, 2004). In this sense, examining the life sciences curricula in terms of right to participation from 1968 until now will provide comprehensive information about whether there is an arrangement about CPR within the context of the course since the enactment of the UN Convention on the Right of the Child in Turkey, and whether curricular changes implemented after the enactment of Convention have brought about a change and novelty with regards to the arrangements about CPR. In sum, it will provide information about the process both before and after the enactment of the Convention on CPR in Turkey. However, there is no research which examines the life sciences curricula in terms of children's right to participation from a historical perspective in Turkey, based on the limited number of studies found in the

reviewing of the literature. With these reasons in mind, this research aimed at analyzing the life sciences curricula in terms of CRP in Turkey starting from 1968 up to now.

## **2. METHOD**

### **2.1. Research Model**

The study was designed as qualitative research which investigated the life sciences curricula comparatively starting from 1968 until today (Patton, 2014). The document analysis technique was used in the research, and the 1968, 1998, 2005 and 2015 curricula were examined by using content analysis. Thus, changes and developments happened through the arrangements about CRP in the life sciences curricula were attempted to be detected in the historical process.

### **2.2. Research Data and Analysis Process**

The data set of the research comprised the printed documents regarding the 1968, 1998, 2005 and 2015 life sciences curricula. The dataset was analyzed using content analysis. The open and selective coding processes (Strauss & Corbin, 1990), which are the initial phases of the content analysis, were pursued. The data regarding the curricula were examined line by line in accordance with the purpose of the research in the analysis process. 32 codes about CPR were formed based on direct and indirect meanings emerged. A total of 11 categories were constructed by grouping the codes which served to similar tasks or purposes. In order to ensure the reliability of the results of the study, the dataset was checked by an expert in children's rights education. The coding carried out by the field expert and the researcher were compared, and they discussed the divergent codes leading to dissidence and tried to reach a

consensus about the coding. Furthermore, the findings are presented with quotations so as to animate the described issues in the mind of the readers.

### 3. FINDINGS

The findings of the research demonstrated that the arrangements which can be considered within the context of CPR in the life sciences curricula from 1968 up till now can be combined into 11 categories. These findings are provided in Table 1.

**Table 1. The Arrangements Regarding CPR in the Life Sciences Curricula**

Categories of Children's Participation Rights	Codes Regarding Children's Participation Rights	The Life Sciences Curricula			
		1968	1998	2005	2015
Expression of opinions	Direct emphasis on expressing opinions freely	-	√	√	√
	Indirect emphasis on expressing opinions	√	√	√	√
	Expressing his/her own needs, desires and opinions	-	√	√	√
Participation in decision-making	Participation in the decisions regarding the school	-	-	√	-
	Participation in the decisions regarding the classroom	-	√	√	√
	Participation in the decisions in the family	-	√	√	-
Participation in the formation of the rules process	Participation in the process of forming the school rules	-	-	√	-
	Participation in the process of forming the classroom rules	-	-	√	√
	Participation in the process of forming the rules at home	-	√	√	-
Participation in elections	Participation in elections in the classroom	-	√	√	-
	Participation in elections in the school	-	-	√	-
Participation in games, relaxation and entertainment activities	Participation in games, entertainment and relaxation activities at school	√	√	√	√
	Participation in games, entertainment and relaxation activities at home	√	√	√	√

**Table 1. The Arrangements Regarding CPR in the Life Sciences Curricula (Cont.)**

Categories of Children’s Participation Rights	Codes Regarding Children’s Participation Rights	The Life Sciences Curricula			
		1968	1998	2005	2015
Participation in teaching-learning process	Active participation in learning activities	-	√	√	√
	Participation in the planning of teaching and learning studies	√	-	-	√
Participation in social activities and collaborative studies	Participation in club/educational branch activities	√	√	√	-*
	Participation in ceremonies and celebrations at school	√	√	√	√
	Participation in social solidarity and aid	√	√	√	√
Participation in environmental protection and sustainable development	Using resources consciously	√	√	√	√
	Undertaking responsibility in protecting the environment and keeping it clean	√	√	√	√
	Producing projects to keep the environment clean	-	-	√	-
	Observing behaviors which lead to environmental pollution	-	-	-	√
	Growing plants and trees	√	√	-	√
	Contributing to recycling	-	-	-	√
Participation in health services	Recognizing health organizations	√	√	√	√
	Benefiting from health services	√	√	√	√
Participation as citizens	Being a citizen with democratic behaviors	√	√	√	-
	Undertaking tasks and responsibilities in the development of the country	√	-	√	√
Participation in rules	Participation in school rules	√	√	√	√
	Participation in community life rules	√	√	√	√
	Participation in classroom rules	√	√	√	√
	Participation in rules at home	-	√	√	-

\*There is an emphasis on participation in group studies.

When Table 1 is examined, it can be observed that the arrangements about CPR in the life sciences curricula were the expression of opinions; participation in



decision-making; participation in the process of forming the rules; participation in elections; participation in games, relaxation and entertainment activities; participation in teaching-learning process; participation in social activities and collaborative studies; participation in environmental protection and sustainable development; participation in health services; participation as citizens, and participation in rules. They were were combined into 11 categories. The findings regarding these categories are presented phase by phase in the historical development process.

In the 1968 curriculum, children's right to expression was not specified directly. However, children's expression of their views was indirectly emphasized in the activities prescribed in the curriculum, and it is seen that some arrangements to be considered within this scope were made. For example, it was paid attention to making plans in the teaching-learning process together with students, and children's expressing their opinions about the procedural arrangements for their own learning was stressed. The curriculum targeted to cultivate democratic behaviors, and it was, therefore, emphasized that opinions and beliefs must be respected in order for individuals to express their opinions freely. This is delineated in the purposes of the curriculum as: "*They become citizens with democratic behaviors and beliefs*" (1968: 56) and "*...having them understand the fact that people have mutual rights and responsibilities and they must respect one another's opinions and beliefs*" (1968: 56). In the curriculum, no findings were obtained with regards to children's participation in decision processes and the construction of the rules and elections. However, children's participation in game activities, relaxation, and entertainment activities at home and school and social activities and aid services were highlighted. Children's participation in educational branch activities, ceremonies, celebrations and social solidarity studies was emphasized within the context of participation in social activities and aid services. Gaining information about

health organizations and benefiting from health services were included within the context of participation in health services. With regards to participation as a citizen, being citizens with democratic behaviors and undertaking tasks and responsibilities in the development of the country were emphasized. Participation in community life rules, classroom rules, and school rules was included in terms of participation in rules. Using resources consciously, growing plants and trees and undertaking responsibilities in protecting the environment and keeping it clean were counted among the issues covered in participation in the protection of the environment and sustainable development. Nature corners were asked to be set up in the curriculum which tried to tend children towards the activities about loving, recognizing and developing the environment.

Children’s expression of their thoughts was specified in the 1998 curriculum for the first time. This situation was stated as “*Expressing emotions and thoughts freely*” (1998: 104) within the context of goals and behaviors in the curriculum. In addition, children’s rights were determined as a distinct goal, differently from the 1968 curriculum, and human rights and responsibilities were strongly emphasized. Students’ participation in decision processes was also included in the curriculum, unlike the 1968 curriculum. In this sense, attention was paid to the participation in decision processes in the classroom and at home. Consistent with the 1968 curriculum, children’s active participation in creating rules at home, school or classroom was not directly involved in the curriculum. Children’s use of the right to vote and stand for election and warranting this gentlemanly were highlighted in the curriculum, and detailed information was provided about how the class president would be elected. Deciding who would take part in educational branches through elections was also underscored. Attention was paid to children’s participation in game, entertainment and relaxation activities at home and schools, and it was aimed at making children

realize the importance of doing this. In the curriculum, students' active participation in the teaching-learning processes and learning by doing and experiencing were highlighted, but the emphasis on the participation in planning the teaching-learning processes in the 1968 curriculum was removed. Similar to the 1968 curriculum, some arrangements regarding participation in social activities and aid studies were made in the 1998 curriculum. With regards to participation in environmental protection and sustainable development, using resources consciously, undertaking responsibility for the protection of the environment and keeping it clean and growing plants and trees were stressed. In this sense, various explanations which require participation in activities such as throwing garbage into the waste bin, taking part in keeping the classroom clean, warning those dirtying the classroom, protecting plants and animals and warning those harming them were included. At the same time, it was attempted to develop attitudes about the significance of protecting the environment and natural beauties and to cultivate the skill to grow plants for students. Having information about the organizations offering health services and benefiting from health services were emphasized in terms of participation in health services. Beyond giving theoretical information, visits to health organizations and carrying out drama activities about how to participate in this process were included. Children's participation in school, home, classroom and community rules was aimed to help them become citizens displaying democratic behaviors. However, the emphasis on undertaking tasks and responsibility in the development of the country was removed in the curriculum.

The findings about the 2005 life sciences curriculum indicated that raising awareness about children's rights and many human rights was emphasized, and human rights and citizenship were defined as an intermediary discipline. Furthermore, assigning democratic values was significantly elaborated and

participation was specified as a skill to be developed in children in the curriculum. Consistent with the 1998 curriculum, children’s expressing their thoughts was covered, and various outcomes which facilitate students’ voicing their thoughts in family and classroom atmospheres were specified. Therefore, children’s participation in decision-making and creating the rules in school, family and classroom atmospheres were included in the curriculum. Unlike the 1968 and 1998 curricula, children’s participation in creating the rules was underscored in this curriculum for the first time. Participation in decision processes at school level was emphasized in this curriculum, unlike the 1998 curriculum. The statements “*The student participates in determining school and classroom rules...*” (2005: 47) and “*The student participates decision-making processes at school*” (2005: 47) can be given as examples of this aspect. Children’s participation in elections was extended from their participation in classroom-level elections to school-level elections, differently from the 1998 curriculum. The statement “*The student displays behaviors which democracy culture requires by participating in elections at school and classroom.*” (2005: 47) exemplifies this change. Similar to the 1968 and 1998 curricula, children’s participation in game, relaxation and entertainment activities both at home and school was included. Cultivating the characteristic of being enterprising was emphasized to ensure all children’s participation in these activities. Students’ active participation in the activities was targeted in terms of teaching-learning processes akin to the 1998 curriculum. Participation in club/educational branch activities, ceremonies, and celebrations, social aid, and solidarity studies was covered in terms of participation in social activities in the curriculum similar to the 1968 and 1998 curricula. For participating in club studies, for example, the outcome “*The student collaborates for the completion of a task in the club and other group studies and shares responsibility*” (2005: 49). Students are asked to produce projects to keep the environment clean, which was not included in

1968 and 1998 curricula with regards to environmental protection and sustainable development. The statement *“The student designs a project in order to keep the environment clean”* (2005: 58) can be given as an example to this aspect. In the curriculum, there is no direct emphasis on growing plants and trees. In terms of participation in health services, getting information about health organizations and benefiting from health services were included in the curriculum like the 1968 and 1998 curricula. Apart from these, knowing the right to health is also aimed in the curriculum. This is clearly delineated with the outcome *“The student knows his/her right to health”* (2005: 58). Participation as a citizen was explained in detail in terms of being citizens who display democratic behaviors and undertaking tasks and responsibilities for the development of the country. Two statements *“Realizing that those in his/her age group also have responsibilities for a better world”* (2005:24) and *“Determining what needs to be done so as to protect, strengthen and develop the Republic and undertaking relevant responsibilities”* (2005: 36) exemplify this aspect.

The findings about the 2015 curriculum demonstrated that children’s rights and human rights were not directly involved similar to the 2005 curriculum and that there was not an intermediary discipline which attempts to teach children’s rights or human rights. Nevertheless, social participation and decision-making are defined among the competencies which form the curriculum. Children’s communicating their thoughts, desires, and needs with courtesy are identified among the outcomes. *“The student states his/her needs, desires, emotions, thoughts and objections with courtesy”* (2015: 6) can be given as an example. The emphasis made on participation in decision-making processes is seen to have decreased in the 2015 curriculum when compared to the 2005 curricula, and it is observed that the emphasis on children’s participation in decision-making processes in family and schools is removed, but participation in

decision-making processes at the classroom level is covered in the curriculum. This is stressed with the statement *“The student participates in decision-making processes about classroom-related issues”* (2015: 12), and the things to be done within the context of this outcome are detailed by specifying that *“Determining and planning in-class activities in the light of different thoughts and solutions, determining classroom rules, preparing the bulletin boards and decorating the classroom will be underscored”* (2015: 12). Thus, children’s participation in planning in-class activities, forming the physical arrangements and creating classroom rules is stressed. There are, however, no details about participation at classroom or school elections, unlike the 2005 curriculum. Consistent with the 1968, 1998 and 2005 curricula, participation in games and relaxation at home or school is emphasized in the 2015 curriculum. No information is provided pertaining to participation in educational branch/club studies in the 2015 curriculum. Nonetheless, students’ participation in group studies at school is noted. The outcomes obtained by participation in ceremonies and celebrations at school are included in the curriculum and exemplified as such; *“The student participates in the studies related to social aid and solidarity”* (2015: 18) and *“The student participates in the activities related to national festivals”* (2015: 20). Producing projects for keeping the environment clean within the context of environmental protection and sustainable development is not emphasized in the 2015 curriculum; and observing the behaviors causing environmental pollution, growing plants and trees and contributing to recycling are encompassed in the curriculum. The significance of growing plants and trees is delineated with the statement *“The student understands the contributions of growing plants and planting trees”* (2015: 15), and these activities are encouraged under the existing circumstances. Recycling is covered in this curriculum for the first time, and getting information about the substances which can be recycled and contribute to recycling are brought to the forefront.

Introducing an organization or organizations which offer health services is emphasized in terms of participation in health services. Obeying the rules is dealt with as a skill in the curriculum, and participation in school, community and classroom rules is also included. The concept of citizenship is never underscored, and the citizenship tasks strongly emphasized in the 2005 curriculum are removed. However, their tasks and responsibilities for the development of the country are specified in the curriculum. The statement "*The student makes connections between the development of the country and undertaking his/her tasks and responsibilities*" (2015: 20) can be given as an example.

#### **4. CONCLUSION, DISCUSSION, and SUGGESTIONS**

The results of the research demonstrated that there have been some arrangements which can be considered within the context of CPR in all of the curricula starting from 1968 until today in Turkey. In this sense, it was observed that children's expression of their thoughts was not emphasized in the 1968 curriculum directly, and this right was directly stressed in the 1998 curriculum for the first time. Similarly, children's expressing their needs, desires, and thoughts was covered in the 2005 and 2015 curricula. Despite this, various arrangements which can be considered in terms of CPR were included in the 1968 curriculum. The scope of these arrangements was expanded starting from the 1998 to 2005 curricula, and it was observed to have been narrowed down in the 2015 curriculum. In this sense, it may be suggested that there were some arrangements about CPR which could be viewed within the scope of life sciences curricula in Turkey before the enactment of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. Involving children's expression of their thoughts directly and expanding the scope of the arrangements made in the curricula developed later can be considered as an endeavor towards raising participative citizens who the

democratic management system requires and carrying out the responsibilities issued for the participating countries in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. The reason behind this restriction observed in the 2015 curriculum may be that a new course named as human rights, citizenship and democracy is added at 4th-grade primary school level. In a similar vein, human rights are defined as an intermediary discipline in the 2005 curriculum and there is a direct emphasis on teaching children’s rights; however, these arrangements are not included in the 2015 curriculum. The unstressed or restricted issues are included in the 4th-grade human rights, citizenship and democracy course.

The results also showed that teachers’ and students’ collaborative planning in teaching-learning processes, which are of critical importance for the construction of a democratic school (Apple & Beane, 2011; Yamashita, Davies, & Williams, 2010), was proposed in the 1968 life sciences curriculum, and this can be viewed to be significant for students’ expressing their thoughts. It is, however, interesting that this arrangement has not continued in other curricula orderly. Participation in environmental protection and sustainable development which is one of the contexts stressed in the Convention to enhance children’s right to participation (Hodgkin & Newell, 1998) is another significant point considered in the life sciences curricula since 1968. According to Hart (2016), planning, designing, organizing and managing the physical environment are ideal for children’s participation, and children are observed to perceive the problems in these aspects more clearly when compared to many societal problems. In this regard, from 1968 to 2015, using resources consciously and undertaking responsibilities in protecting and keeping the environment clean are highlighted in all of the curricula. The activities regarding growing plants and trees are involved in the 1968, 1998 and 2015 curricula. It may be argued that these activities were considered to be significant both prior to and after the enactment of the Convention. Directing students towards developing projects



in order to keep the environment clean in the 2015 curriculum can be accepted as an important step for participation in real terms. The removal of this emphasis on developing projects in the 2015 curriculum is an interesting issue, though. Despite that, the emphasis on contributing to recycling directly for the first time may be interpreted as an important condition for participation in environmental protection and sustainable development. In this sense, based on the results, it may be stated that there were some studies which can be evaluated in terms of children's participation in environmental protection and sustainable development before the enactment of the UN Convention on the Right of the Child in Turkey; however, the studies which can directly facilitate children's participation in real terms are involved in the curricula developed after the Convention.

On the other hand, raising democratic individuals requires the applied teaching of values and principles (Şişman, Güleş, & Dönmez, 2010). This requires paying attention to the significance of family and school atmospheres for children's adopting a participative identity. School and family atmospheres should be coherent and supportive of each other (Kontaş, 2009) for the construction of a participative democratic identity. The houses are experienced by children generally as the setting most facilitative of their voice and participation in their everyday lives (Horgan, Forde, Martin, & Parkes, 2017:280). Therefore, the family should be ideal for the first phase of democratic experiences (Hodgkin & Newell, 1998). In a family atmosphere in which CPR is ensured, the child should be able to express his/her desires, needs and thoughts and participate in creating rules and decision-making processes. Ensuring CPR at schools can be possible through creating school and classroom rules, participation in courses, extra-curricular activities, school management, electoral activities, the issues concerning the child, expressing his/her thoughts and establishing an association (Akyüz, 2016; Alderson, 2000; Emir & Kaya, 2004; Inman & Burke,

2002; Yamashita et al., 2010; Yeşil, 2002). In the life sciences curricula, in this sense, various arrangements are made in terms of children’s participation in family and school atmospheres.

Children’s participation in decision-making processes and creating the rules in the family is emphasized in the 1998 and 2005 curricula, which is a significant condition for children’s right to participation. However, it is interesting that this emphasis is removed in the 2015 curriculum. Aiming at participating children in making decisions and creating the rules at school can be considered as an important step for children’s right to participation. Additionally, it is a fact that children will protect the rules better when they take roles in creating them (Davies, Harber, & Schweisfurth, 2005; Karaman-Kepenekçi, 2003). The 2005 curriculum is seen to be the most developed curriculum with its emphasis on involving students in decision-making and creating rules both at classroom and school levels. This emphasis was expanded from 1998 to 2005, but it is carried out only at the classroom level, which can be viewed as a deficiency.

One of the arrangements regarding CPR in the life sciences curriculum is the right to play games, relaxation, and entertainment. In all of the curricula from 1968 to 2015, children’s participation in games, relaxation and entertainment activities at home and school atmospheres has been underlined. This right is one of the basic needs of children in terms of their physiological and personal development, but it is ignored and dealt with in a later time when compared to economic and social rights (Küçükali, 2015). However, it is critical that this right was included in the curricula in Turkey before the enactment of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. Another significant issue in terms of CPR is that children’s participation in social activities and aid studies has been stressed in the life sciences curricula starting from 1968 to 2015. It is observed that these studies which contribute to children’s right to vote and stand for

election, fairness, developing a sense of responsibility and preparing for democratic life (Karakoyun, 2011; Çınar, 2002, cf. Kaya, 2014) were included in the curricula before the enactment of the UN Convention. Raising children as citizens who have democratic behaviors and children's undertaking tasks and responsibilities for the development of the country are highlighted in the life sciences curricula in terms of participation as a citizen. This can be viewed as an important arrangement for raising democratic individuals who the democratic management system requires and for cultivating consciousness about tasks and responsibilities in the development of the country.

Taken together, it may be suggested that there have been various arrangements about CPR in the life sciences curricula in Turkey since 1968. However, these arrangements are seen to have been more comprehensive after the enactment of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. Some arrangements about CPR did not last long in the change and development process, and their scopes were narrowed down. In the light of the results drawn, it may be recommended that the arrangements made about CPR in the life sciences curriculum should be revised in a constant and comprehensive way. In addition, more attention should be concentrated on the arrangements which can achieve children's participation in real terms in the life sciences curriculum. This study focused only on CPR. The life sciences curriculum should be examined in terms of different rights.

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## GENİŞ ÖZET

### Giriş

Çocukların katılım hakkı (ÇKH) ilk defa BM çocuk hakları sözleşmesinde (BM ÇHS’de) gündeme gelmiştir. Bu hak, her çocuğun kendisini ilgilendiren bütün konularda görüşlerini serbestçe ifade edebilmesini öngörmektedir. ÇKH, çocuklara demokratik değerlerin kazandırılması ve çocukların gelecekte katılımcı vatandaşlar olmaları için büyük önem taşımaktadır (Obradovich ve Mastern, 2007). Ayrıca, ÇKH akademik başarı ve okula bağlılık artışında önemli bir faktör olarak tanımlanmaktadır. Bununla birlikte, bu hakkın fiilen hayata geçirilmesinde önemli problemler yaşanmaktadır (Hammarberg, 2012; Lansdown, 1994). Bu durum, çocuklara katılım haklarını kullanabilmeleri için gerekli bilgi, beceri, tutumun kazandırılması ve uygulama fırsatlarının oluşturulmasına yönelik çalışmalar yapılmasını gerektirmektedir. Bu bağlamda, yapılabilecek çalışmalardan biri ise öğretim programlarında ÇKH için düzenlemeler yapılmasıdır. ÇKH için düzenleme yapılan öğretim programlarından biri de hayat bilgisi dersi öğretim programıdır. Bu doğrultuda, ilkokul düzeyinde ÇKH için yapılan düzenlemelerle ilgili bilgi sahibi olmak için hayat bilgisi dersi öğretim programlarının incelenmesinin önemli olduğu söylenebilir. Hayat bilgisi dersi öğretim programlarının tarihsel bağlamda incelenmesi ise Türkiye’de ilkokul düzeyinde ÇKH için yapılan çalışmaların niteliği, gelişimi ve değişim süreci ile ilgili detaylı bilgiler sağlaması açısından önem taşımaktadır. 1968’den günümüze hayat bilgisi dersi öğretim programlarının ÇKH açısından karşılaştırmalı olarak incelenmesi, BM ÇHS imzalanıp yürürlüğe girdiği yıllarda ders bağlamında Türkiye’de ÇKH kapsamında değerlendirilebilecek düzenlemelerin mevcut olup olmadığına; BM ÇHS yürürlüğe girdikten sonra gerçekleştirilen program değişikliği hareketlerinin ÇKH düzenlemelerinde değişimi ve yeniliği beraberinde getirip getirmediğine dair kapsamlı bilgiler sağlayacaktır. Belirtilen gerekçeler doğrultusunda bu çalışmada; Türkiye’de 1968’den günümüze kadar hazırlanan hayat bilgisi dersi öğretim programlarında ÇKH için yapılan düzenlemelerin karşılaştırmalı olarak incelenmesi amaçlanmıştır.

### Yöntem

1968’den günümüze hayat bilgisi dersi öğretim programlarının ÇKH açısından karşılaştırmalı olarak incelendiği çalışma nitel bir araştırma olarak



desenlenmiştir (Patton, 2014). Doküman analizinin kullanıldığı araştırmada 1968, 1998, 2005 ve 2015 hayat bilgisi dersi öğretim programları içerik analizi yapılarak incelenmiştir. Analiz sonucunda ÇKH ile ilgili 32 kod ve 11 kategori elde edilmiştir. Araştırma sürecinde analiz sonuçlarının güvenilirliğini sağlayabilmek için ise uzman görüşüne başvurulmuştur. Alan uzmanının yaptığı kodlamalar araştırmacının yaptığı kodlamalarla karşılaştırılarak görüş ayrılığı olan kodlar üzerinde birlikte tartışılarak uzlaşmaya varılmıştır.

## **Bulgular**

Araştırma bulguları, Türkiye’de 1968 yılından günümüze kadar hazırlanan tüm hayat bilgisi dersi öğretim programlarında ÇKH bağlamında değerlendirilebilecek çeşitli düzenlemeler yapıldığını göstermiştir. Bu bağlamda, 1968 programında çocukların görüşlerini ifade etmelerinin doğrudan vurgulanmadığı, 1998 programında ise ilk kez görüşlerini ifade etmelerinin doğrudan belirtildiği, benzer şekilde 2005 ve 2015 programlarında da çocukların kendi ihtiyaç, istek ve görüşlerini ifade etmelerine yer verildiği gözlenmiştir. Bununla birlikte, 1968 programında ÇKH kapsamında değerlendirilebilecek çeşitli düzenlemeler tespit edilmiştir. Çocukların karar süreçlerine katılımına ise ilk defa 1998 programında yer verilmiş olup, bu doğrultuda sınıf ve aile içinde alınan kararlara çocukların dahil edilmesi belirtilmiştir. 2005 programında bu iki programdan farklı olarak okul düzeyinde de karar süreçlerine çocukların dahil edilmesine yer verilmiştir. 2015 programında ise yalnızca sınıf ortamında çocukların karar süreçlerine katılımı vurgulanmış olup kapsamı daraltılmıştır. Kuralların oluşturulması sürecine çocukların katılımına da benzer şekilde ilk defa 1998 programında yer verilmiştir. Bu doğrultuda ev kurallarının oluşturulmasına vurguda bulunmuş, 2005 programında kapsam genişletilerek çocukların okul, sınıf ve ev kurallarının oluşturulmasına yer verilmiştir. 2015 programında ise yalnızca sınıf kurallarının oluşturulmasına çocukların katılımına yer verilmiştir. Çocukların oyun, eğlenme, dinlenme faaliyetlerine katılımına ise 1968’den 2015’e kadar tüm programlarda yer verilmiş, bu doğrultuda ev ve okulda düzenlemelere dikkat çekilmiştir. Benzer şekilde, sosyal faaliyetlere, yardımlaşma çalışmalarına ve sağlık hizmetlerine katılıma 1968’den günümüze kadar tüm programlarda yer verilmiştir. Çocukların seçimlere katılmalarına ise ilk defa 1998 programında yer verilmiş olup, bu bağlamda sınıf içinde seçimlere katılıma yer verilmiştir. 2005 programında ise çocukların hem sınıf hem de okul düzeyinde seçimlere katılıma yer verilmiş olup, 2015 programında seçimlerle ilgili düzenlemelere yer verilmemiştir. Öğretme-öğrenme sürecinin planlanmasına çocukların katılımı yalnızca 1968 programında ifade edilmiş olup, 1998, 2005 ve 2015 programlarında çocukların sürece etkin katılımı vurgulanmıştır. Çevresel koruma ve sürdürülebilir kalkınmaya katılım bağlamında değerlendirilebilecek düzenlemelere 1968’den 2015’e kadar tüm programlarda yer verilmiştir. Bununla birlikte, bu bağlamda yapılan düzenlemelerin kapsamı programlarda

farklı şekilde düzenlenmiştir. Çocukların kurallara katılımına ise 1968’den 2015’e kadar tüm programlarda yer verilmiş olup bu doğrultuda okul, ev, sınıf ve toplu yaşam kurallarına uymaya yer verilmiştir. Vatandaş olarak katılım bağlamında ise çocukların demokratik davranışlara sahip vatandaş olmalarına ve ülkenin gelişmesinde görev ve sorumluluklar üstlenmelerine vurguda bulunulmuştur. 1968 ve 2005 programlarında bunlardan her ikisine; 1998 programında yalnızca demokratik davranışlara sahip vatandaş olmaya; 2015 programında ise yalnızca ülkenin gelişmesinde görev ve sorumluluklar üstlenmeye yer verilmiştir.

### **Tartışma, Sonuç ve Öneriler**

Araştırma sonuçları, 1968 programında çocukların görüşlerini ifade etmelerinin doğrudan belirtilmediğini; bununla birlikte programda ÇKH kapsamında değerlendirilebilecek çeşitli düzenlemelerin mevcut olduğunu göstermiştir. Bu düzenlemelerin kapsamının ise 1998 programından 2005 programına kadar genişletildiğini, 2015 programında ise kısmen daraltıldığını ortaya koymuştur. Bu doğrultuda, Türkiye’de BM ÇHS yürürlüğe girmeden önce de hayat bilgisi dersi öğretim programlarında ÇKH bağlamında nitelendirilebilecek düzenlemelerin bulunduğunu söylemek mümkündür. 1998 programında çocukların görüşlerini ifade etmelerine doğrudan yer verilmesi ve sonrasında hazırlanan programlarda yapılan düzenlemelerin daha da detaylandırılması BM ÇHS’nin taraf ülkelere yükledikleri sorumlulukları yerine getirmeye ve demokratik yönetim sisteminin gerektirdiği özellikle katılımcı vatandaş yetiştirmeye yönelik bir çaba olarak değerlendirilebilir. 2015 programında gözlenen kapsam daralmasının ise ilkökul 4. sınıf düzeyine insan hakları, yurttaşlık ve demokrasi adlı bir dersin eklenmesine bağlanabilir. Ayrıca, çocukların katılım hakkı için önemli bağlamlardan birini oluşturan çevresel koruma ve sürdürülebilir kalkınmaya katılımın (Hodgkin ve Newell, 1998) 1968’den günümüze kadar tüm hayat bilgisi dersi öğretim programlarında yerini alması diğer bir önemli noktadır. Aynı zamanda araştırma sonuçları, 1968’den 2015’e kadar tüm programlarda hem ev hem de okul ortamında çocukların oyun, dinlenme ve eğlence faaliyetlerine katılımlarına dikkat çekilmiştir. Çocukların, fizyolojik ve kişisel gelişimleri bakımından en temel ihtiyaçlardan birisi olan; çocukların ekonomik ve sosyal hakları yanında ihmal edilen ve çok daha sonraları ele alınan bu hakka (Küçükali, 2015) Türkiye’de BM ÇHS’nin yürürlüğe girmeden önce yer verilmiş olması önemli bir durumdur. Hayat bilgisi dersi öğretim programlarında da bu doğrultuda çocukların hem aile hem de okul ortamına katılımı için çeşitli düzenlemelere dikkat çekildiği görülmektedir. Hayat bilgisi programlarında, vatandaş olarak katılım bağlamında yapılan düzenlemelerin ise demokratik bir yönetim sisteminin gerektirdiği demokratik bireylerin yetiştirilmesi ve çocuklara ülkenin gelişiminde görev ve sorumluluk bilinci kazandırılması için önemli bir düzenleme olduğu söylenebilir. Araştırma sonuçları, ÇKH için yapılan düzenlemelerden bir bölümünün kapsamının program değişikliği sürecinde

daraldığını göstermiştir. Bu doğrultuda, program değişikliği sürecinde ÇKH düzenlemelerinin süreklilik gösterecek ve kapsamının genişletilecek şekilde yapılması önerilebilir. Ayrıca, hayat bilgisi dersi öğretim programları çocukların sahip olduğu farklı haklar açısından incelenebilir.