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DEVELOPMENT OF THE SOCIAL STUDIES COURSE ATTITUDE SCALE

(Research article)

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Abstract

This research is a scale development study to measure students' attitudes towards social studies course. The study group comprised of 7th grade students studying in Gaziantep in the first semester of the 2023-2024 academic year. Initially, an item pool consisted of 50 items was created for the scale. Expert opinion was obtained to verify the face and content validity of the items. According to the experts' opinions, the content validity ratio values for the items were calculated using the Lawshe (1975) technique. Since the calculations proved that all 50 items ensured the content validity, all items included in the scale. Exploratory factor analysis was performed for the construct validity, and then the scale was applied to 429 students. In the next stage, the communality values for each item were calculated and 15 items with communality value below .45 were removed from the scale. Then, factor load, eigenvalue, variance and cumulative variance values analyses were carried out for the remaining 35 items and a 5-factor structure was obtained. Confirmatory factor analysis was performed to check the compatibility among the items. It was found that the confirmatory factor fit index values of the items were in accordance with the reference range. Cronbach Alpha reliability coefficient was also calculated for the overall scale and for each factor. According to the findings, this scale is said to be quite reliable consisting of 35 items with a 5-point Likert type and measures 5 sub-dimensions, which can be used to measure students' attitudes towards social studies course.

Keywords: Social studies, attitude, attitude scale, factor analysis

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Introduction

The development of societies is closely related to science and technological innovations. In modern societies, scientific and technological developments are changing rapidly and constantly. In a rapidly changing era, accessibility to scientific resources and any information has increased, especially with the development of technological tools. The abundance and unorganized forms of information sometimes causes confusion and brings the question of how to most accurately access the desired and reliable information in this complexity since the flow of information is constantly updated because of the changes and renovations. For this reason, it has become even more important to access the right sources, select the desired information, and restructure and infer the meaning of this information. In today's world where information sources are diversified and electronic tools are enriched, individuals need to acquire a series of skills in order to select, analyze, process and use the information, and also share this information in a safe ways (Akcan & Ablak, 2022; İneç & Akpınar, 2017; Sural & Dedebali, 2018). These skills, defined as lifelong learning skills, are used not only in certain periods of life but throughout life. Raising individuals, who are aware of the value of learning through these skills and also eager to learn new things, will undoubtedly contribute to the development of society (İnel-Ekici, 2017; Soran, Akkoyunlu & Kavak, 2006). In this respect, it could be claimed that educational institutions have a great responsibility, especially when it is considered that these skills are acquired in secondary school age. After graduating from secondary school, a student is expected to have skills such as researching, questioning, analyzing information, critical thinking, and accessing accurate information sources. When the secondary school curriculum is examined, it can be said that the social studies course is the first to undertake this mission. This is stated in Social Studies Course Curriculum in 2018 as "Students who complete primary education have moral integrity and self-awareness, self-confidence and self-discipline in accordance with their developmental stages and their own personality, and also they have acquired the basic verbal, mathematical and scientific reasoning as well as social skills and aesthetic sensitivity they will need in their life, and can use them effectively to ensure that they lead a healthy life"(MEB, 2018). Moreover, social studies course directs students to desired behaviors, prepares them for life, and helps them acquire characteristics of a good citizen. Social studies course helps children know the world and become self-confident, knowledgeable and well-equipped individuals who can effectively interact with each other and their environment (Barr, 1997). In this respect, when considered within the scope of both the course itself and its curriculum, in the social studies course students are expected to develop good attitudes towards the environment, people and the features of life (Demir & Akengin, 2010).

Attitudes are affective reactions that determine individuals' behaviors, interests and learning. Şebin, Serarslan, Yazıcı, Tuzoğlu, Gülbahçe and Yorulmazlar (2003) define attitude as internal actions such as emotions, thoughts and beliefs that cannot be observed directly. An individual's negative or positive attitude towards an issue gives us a clue about their possible

behavior towards the relevant issue. Although attitudes are generally discussed in academic contexts, they should also be taken into consideration in affective field training (Erçiçek, Günal & Ünay, 2023). It is thought that students' attitudes towards courses are closely related to their interest in the course and, of course, their learning. Since attitude is a predictor of human behavior, attitude studies are considered important and many studies related to attitude have been done in different fields. When the related-literature is examined, there have been many attitude scale development studies (Arslan, 2006; Balım & Aydın, 2009; Bulut, Ekici, İşeri & Helvacı, 2002; Cabı, 2016; Chapman, 2003; Duatepe & Çilesiz, 1999; Ekici, 2002; Erçiçek, Günay & Ünay, 2023; Ernst, & Rogers, 2009; Kara, 2010; Kılcan, Çepni & Kılınç, 2017; Kışla, 2016; Korkmaz, Şahin & Yeşil, 2011; Kurnaz & Yiğit, 2010; Laçin & Taşlıbeyaz, 2020; Nuhoğlu, 2008; Otrar & Argın, 2015; Özen, 2022; Palancıoğlu, Karalı & Aydemir, 2023; Russell & Hollander, 1975; Sangwan, Sangwan & Punia, 2021; Urlu, 2020; Tsai, Lin & 2001; Turanlı, Karakaş & Keçeli, 2008; Tzafilkou, Perifanou & Economides, 2021; Üstüner, 2006; Yaşar, 2014). As can be understood from the mentioned studies, it can be said that attitudes have been the subject of studies in different fields to increase the applicability of education and training. Attitudes play an important role in predicting students' behavior at school and their achievement in classes (İneç, 2017; İneç & Akpınar, 2018; Yılmaz & Şeker, 2011). It is a very well-known fact that if students do not want to attend classes or get bored during classes, this negatively affects their learning.

In their study examining students' attitudes towards the social studies course, Aktepe, Tahiroğlu and Sargın (2014) suggest that students should not get bored during lessons and teachers should make the lessons more entertaining and enjoyable. Additionally, they accentuate that the underlying reasons for students' negative attitudes should be investigated since there is close relationship among students' attitudes, learning and success (Ergin, 2006). Attitudes can be difficult to measure since they are verbal behaviors and cannot be measured directly. Thus, measurement tools are developed and used to determine attitudes (Kağıtçıbaşı, 2004). In this respect, it has been accepted that using measurement tools is appropriate in determining students' attitudes in education and training. It has also been found useful to determine students' attitudes, especially negative ones, to change these attitudes and develop new ones (Nuhoğlu, 2008). For this reason, using measurement tools are necessary to determine attitudes and behaviors. In the related literature, it is seen that there are various social studies course attitude scales developed by researchers (Çalışkan, 2008; Evin-Gencel, 2006; Gömleksiz & Kan, 2013; Özkal, 2002; Ulukalın & Topkaya, 2017). However, all these scales were developed before 2018 when the new social studies course curriculum was put into practice. In the literature, there is only one social studies course attitude scale developed by Kandemir, Kaymakçı and Yılmaz (2022). In the present study, it was aimed to develop an up-to-date and effective scale to determine students' attitudes towards the social studies course and to fill the gap in the literature. In line with aim of the study, answers to the following questions are sought:

1. Is the developed social studies course scale valid?

2. Is the developed social studies course attitude scale reliable?

2. Method

This research is a scale development study that aims to determine students' attitudes towards social studies course. The processes of the research are explained below.

2.1. Context of the study

The study group for this research consisted of 7th grade students studying in Gaziantep in the fall semester of 2023-2024 academic year. Before the study, ethics committee permission from the "Research Proposal Ethics Evaluation Board" of a state university was obtained (dated 27.02.2023 and numbered E-50704946-100-269441) and permission for application of the scale was obtained from Gaziantep Provincial Directorate of National Education. Simple random sampling was used to determine the participants. In simple random sampling, all individuals in the universe of research have an equal chance to participate and selection of individuals does not affect each other (Büyüköztürk et al., 2021). For the exploratory factor analysis for the content validity, a preliminary application was piloted with 429 students. For confirmatory factor analysis, the scale was re-applied to 77 students among the ones who had previously completed the scale. Tavşancıl (2014) stated that in scale development studies, the sample size should be at least five times greater than the number of items.

2.2. Data Collection

In general, a literature review is conducted before developing attitude scales. Thus, in this study, related literature and previously developed attitude scales related to social studies course were examined. After reviewing the literature, 30 seventh-grade students from a public school in Gaziantep were asked to write an essay expressing their feelings and thoughts about social studies course. Then, the written essays were thoroughly examined, and an itemization process related to social studies was carried out. The generated items and categories were compared with the attitude scale items found in the literature (Çalışkan, 2008; Demir & Akengin, 2010; Evin Gencel, 2006; Gömleksiz & Kan, 2016; Özkal, 2002; Ulu Kalın & Topkaya, 2017).

A pool of 50 items was created and two Turkish teachers were asked to check these items in terms of language, grammar and spelling. According to teachers' opinions, necessary corrections were done and the items were revised. After revisions, to confirm the face and content validity of the items, opinions were obtained from three field experts, one assessment and evaluation expert and 26 expert teachers. To do this, an online survey was created and sent to the experts. In the survey, three options were provided: "item is appropriate," "item needs correction," and "item should be removed." Additionally, comments were requested for each

suggestion about correction or removal. Following expert opinions, the items were revised, and the final version of the items was formed.

2.3. Data Analysis

In the scope of the research, the 50-item pool were presented to the opinions of 3 content experts, 1 measurement and evaluation expert, and 26 field experts to confirm their content validity. It was a requirement that the experts have at least 10 years of experience. The responses to online-survey were analyzed using the Lawshe technique. After establishing content validity, exploratory factor analysis (EFA) and confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) were conducted for the structural validity of the items. In the final stage, Cronbach's alpha reliability test was performed for the entire scale and each factor to determine the reliability of the items.

3. Results

3.1. Findings Related to Validity

The findings related to the validity of the study are presented under two subtitles: content validity and confirmatory factor analysis.

3.1.1. Content Validity

Based on the expert responses, analyses were conducted using Lawshe's technique (1975) and thus it was decided which items should remain in the scale. In Lawshe's technique, a minimum of 5 and a maximum of 40 expert opinions should be considered (Göl, 2022). In the selection of the experts, it was a requirement for them to have a minimum of 10 years of experience.

In order to conduct the research on time and increase accessibility to experts, the items were sent to three field experts, one assessment and evaluation expert and 26 expert teachers through an online-survey. In the survey, three options were provided for each item: "item is appropriate," "item needs correction," and "item should be removed." If the experts suggest a removal or correction for an item, they were asked to express their suggestions and thoughts in the last part of the survey. Following the expert opinions, the items were revised. In accordance with the answers given by the experts and the Lawshe technique, the content validity ratios for the items were calculated with the following formula:

- CVI: Content validity index
- ne: the number of experts saying item essential
- N: the number of experts

$$CVI = \frac{ne - (N/2)}{N/2}$$

Table 1. CVI values

Items	N	N/2	ne	CVI	Decision	Items	N	N/2	ne	CVI	Decision
Item 1	26	13	26	1,00	Accept	Item 26	26	13	24	0,92	Accept
Item 2	26	13	26	1,00	Accept	Item 27	26	13	25	1,00	Accept
Item 3	26	13	26	1,00	Accept	Item28	26	13	26	1,00	Accept
Item 4	26	13	26	1,00	Accept	Item 29	26	13	26	0,92	Accept
Item 5	26	13	26	1,00	Accept	Item 30	26	13	25	1,00	Accept
Item 6	26	13	26	1,00	Accept	Item 31	26	13	26	1,00	Accept
Item 7	26	13	26	1,00	Accept	Item 32	26	13	26	1,00	Accept
Item 8	26	13	25	0,92	Accept	Item 33	26	13	26	0,92	Accept
Item 9	26	13	26	1,00	Accept	Item 34	26	13	25	0,85	Accept
Item 10	26	13	26	1,00	Accept	Item 35	26	13	24	0,85	Accept
Item 11	26	13	25	0,92	Accept	Item 36	26	13	24	0,92	Accept
Item 12	26	13	25	0,92	Accept	Item 37	26	13	25	1,00	Accept
Item 13	26	13	26	1,00	Accept	Item 38	26	13	26	1,00	Accept
Item 14	26	13	25	0,92	Accept	Item 39	26	13	26	1,00	Accept
Item 15	26	13	25	0,92	Accept	Item 40	26	13	26	1,00	Accept
Item 16	26	13	25	0,92	Accept	Item 41	26	13	26	1,00	Accept
Item 17	26	13	26	1,00	Accept	Item 42	26	13	26	1,00	Accept
Item 18	26	13	26	1,00	Accept	Item 43	26	13	26	1,00	Accept
Item 19	26	13	24	0,85	Accept	Item 44	26	13	26	1,00	Accept
Item 20	26	13	26	1,00	Accept	Item 45	26	13	26	1,00	Accept
Item 21	26	13	25	0,92	Accept	Item46	26	13	26	1,00	Accept
Item 22	26	13	24	0,85	Accept	Item 47	26	13	26	1,00	Accept
Item 23	26	13	25	0,92	Accept	Item 48	26	13	26	1,00	Accept
Item 24	26	13	26	1,00	Accept	Item 49	26	13	26	1,00	Accept
Item 25	26	13	24	0,85	Accept	Item 50	26	13	26	1,00	Accept

Content validity index for each item was calculated. The CVI values of the items were expected to be greater than .33. As can be seen in Table 1, CVI values of all items were greater than .33. For this reason, since all 50 items ensured the content validity, they remained in the scale. Then, factor analyses were carried out to check the construct validity.

3.1.2. Construct Validity

Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) and Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) were conducted to assess the construct validity of the items. Details regarding the factor analyses are provided below.

3.1.2.1. Findings Related to Exploratory Factor Analysis

To carry out exploratory factor analysis, the 50-item scale was applied to 429 students. Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin and Bartlett Test of Sphericity were conducted to determine whether the sample size was appropriate. Results of the test are given in Table 2.

Table 2. Appropriateness of the data for factor analysis (KMO and Bartlett)

KMO and Bartlett's Test		
KMO- Measure of Sampling Adequacy		**0,960**
Bartlett's test of sphericity	Approximate Chi-square	7439,976
	Degrees of Freedom (df)	595
	Significance (p)	**0,000**

*p<,001

In order to perform factor analysis, the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) value is expected to be between 0 and 1. A value close to 1 indicates that the sample adequacy is accepted as high, and as it moves away from 1, the sample adequacy is accepted as low (Erçiçek et al., 2023; Kartal & Bardakçı, 2018). The KMO value was found to be 0.960 in the research and it is given in table 2. after it was seen that the KMO value was within the reference range, Bartlett test was performed. Bartlett's test determines whether the data is normally distributed or not. As a result of the test, it was seen that the data had a normal distribution as (x^2=7439.976; p<.001). Since these data were within sufficient reference ranges, factor analysis was performed.

When developing a scale, the items are expected to measure the same structure. For construct validity, items that disrupt or affect the main structure must be removed from the scale (Büyüköztürk, 2016). In this regard, it is necessary to calculate the communality values of the items to determine which items should be remained and which ones should be removed from the scale. Communality is indicated as the amount of variance shared with other variables and is expected to be closer to 1 (Kartal & Bardakçı, 2018). Communality values were calculated and the results are presented in Table 3.

Table 3. Communality values of the items

İtems	**Communality Values**	İtems	**Communality Values**
I1	**0,593**	I26	**0,608**
I2	**0,532**	I28	**0,536**
I3	**0,518**	I29	**0,561**
I4	**0,533**	I30	**0,502**
I5	**0,570**	I31	**0,517**
I6	**0,588**	I33	**0,473**
I7	**0,528**	I35	**0,525**
I9	**0,535**	I38	**0,543**
I10	**0,450**	I39	**0,555**
I11	**0,560**	I40	**0,603**
I14	**0,611**	I43	**0,524**
I16	**0,561**	I45	**0,533**
I17	**0,613**	I46	**0,489**
I18	**0,579**	I47	**0,589**
I19	**0,589**	I48	**0,620**
I21	**0,602**	I49	**0,680**
I22	**0,606**	I50	**0,487**
I24	**0,659**		

According to the communality values of the items in Table 3, 15 items (**I8, I12, I13, I15, I20, I23, I24, I25, I27, I32, I34, I37, I41, I42, I44**) that were below 0.45 were removed from the scale. Then, the factor loading, eigenvalue, variance and cumulative variance values of the remaining 35 items were calculated and a 5-factor structure was obtained. Information about the factors is given in Table 4.

Table 4. The total explained variance values of the scale

Subscales	Items	Factor Loadings	Eigenvalue	Variance%	Cumulative Variance
1. Factor	I49	0,720	5,592	15,978	15,978
	I48	0,718			
	I47	0,670			
	I40	0,657			
	I38	0,645			
	I45	0,560			
	I46	0,556			
	I28	0,552			
	I39	0,543			
	I43	0,539			
	I50	0,529			
2. Factor	I17	0,670	4,579	13,082	29,061
	I11	0,667			
	I16	0,653			
	I19	0,640			
	I7	0,589			
	I14	0,585			
	I26	0,584			
	I22	0,539			
3. Factor	I5	0,686	4,563	13,038	42,098
	I1	0,679			
	I2	0,678			
	I4	0,633			
	I6	0,631			
	I3	0,585			
	I10	0,574			
	I9	0,521			
4. Factor	I33	0,667	2,725	7,787	49,885
	I30	0,563			
	I31	0,535			
	I35	0,528			
	I29	0,507			
5. Factor	I24	0,676	2,108	6,024	55,909
	I21	0,608			
	I18	0,595			

When Table 4 is examined, it is clearly seen that 35 items are classified under a 5-factor structure according to the result of Exploratory Factor Analysis. Eigenvalue is seen as important in determining the number of factors, and the eigenvalue of the factors is expected to be 1 or greater than 1 (Büyüköztürk, 2016). The eigenvalue of the first factor was found as 5.592 and variance ratio was found as 15.978, the eigenvalue of the second factor was 4.579 and the variance ratio was 13.082, the eigenvalue of the third factor was 4.563 and the variance ratio was 13.038, the eigenvalue of the fourth factor was 2.725 and the variance ratio

was 7.787, and the eigenvalue of the fifth factor is 2.108 and the variance ratio was 6.024. It was also found that these five factors formed 55.909 of the cumulative variances. When the literature related to social studies was examined, it was found out that cumulative variance rate between 40% and 60% could be accepted (Karagöz, 2016).

After the number of factors of the scale is determined, the distribution of the items that form the factors should be examined. In factor analysis, it is expected that there should be a high relationship among the items of the factors while the relationship between the factors is expected to be low (Kartal & Bardakçı, 2018). First, the correlation matrix of the scale was examined and the relationship among factors and items with high correlation coefficients were checked. Then, the rotated component matrix was examined to identify items that gave more than one loading. The overlapping status of the items and whether the factor load value is within the reference range were examined. Factor load values are expected to be above .50. Load values for the factors included in the scale are presented in Table 5.

Table 5. Rotated components matrix of the scale factor structure

Factor	Items	1. Factor	2. Factor	3. Factor	4. Factor	5. Factor
Sensitivity	I49	0,720				
	I48	0,718				
	I47	0,670				
	I40	0,657				
	I38	0,645				
	I45	0,560				
	I46	0,556				
	I28	0,552				
	I39	0,543				
	I43	0,539				
	I50	0,529				
Appreciation	I17		0,670			
	I11		0,667			
	I16		0,653			
	I19		0,640			
	I7		0,589			
	I14		0,585			
	I26		0,584			
	I22		0,539			
Motivation	I5			0,686		
	I1			0,679		
	I2			0,678		
	I4			0,633		
	I6			0,631		
	I3			0,585		
	I10			0,574		
	I9			0,521		
Usefulness	I33				0,667	
	I30				0,563	
	I31				0,535	

	I35	0,528
	I29	0,507
Responsibility	I24	0,676
	I21	0,608
	I18	0,595

In structural equation modelling, in order to conduct confirmatory factor analysis, there must be at least three items under each factor, and when the Table 5 is examined, it can be observed that there are at least three items for each factor.

As a result of the analyses, 15 of the items in the 50-item scale were removed from the scale because they overlapped or had low factor loading values, and the final form of the scale had a 5-factor structure consisting of a total of 35 items. The first factor was formed of 11 items and named as "sensitivity"; the second factor was formed of eight items and named as "appreciation"; the third was formed of eight items and named as "motivation"; the fourth was formed of five items and named as "usefulness"; the last factor was formed of three items and named as "responsibility".

3.1.2.2. Findings Related to Confirmatory Factor Analysis

Confirmatory factor analysis is necessary to confirm the validity of the structure created by exploratory factor analysis. In other words, confirmatory factor analysis must be performed to check whether there is harmony between the items in the scale (Sönmez & Alacapınar, 2016). In the current study, confirmatory factor analysis and structural equation modeling were used to determine the construct validity of the scale and the fit indices among items. Structural equation modeling is a method that enables the examination of previously unobservable implicit structures with observable variables. AMOS, EQS and LISREL are among the most used programs in structural equation modeling (Yılmaz & Varol, 2015). The AMOS diagram applied in this study is presented in Figure 1:

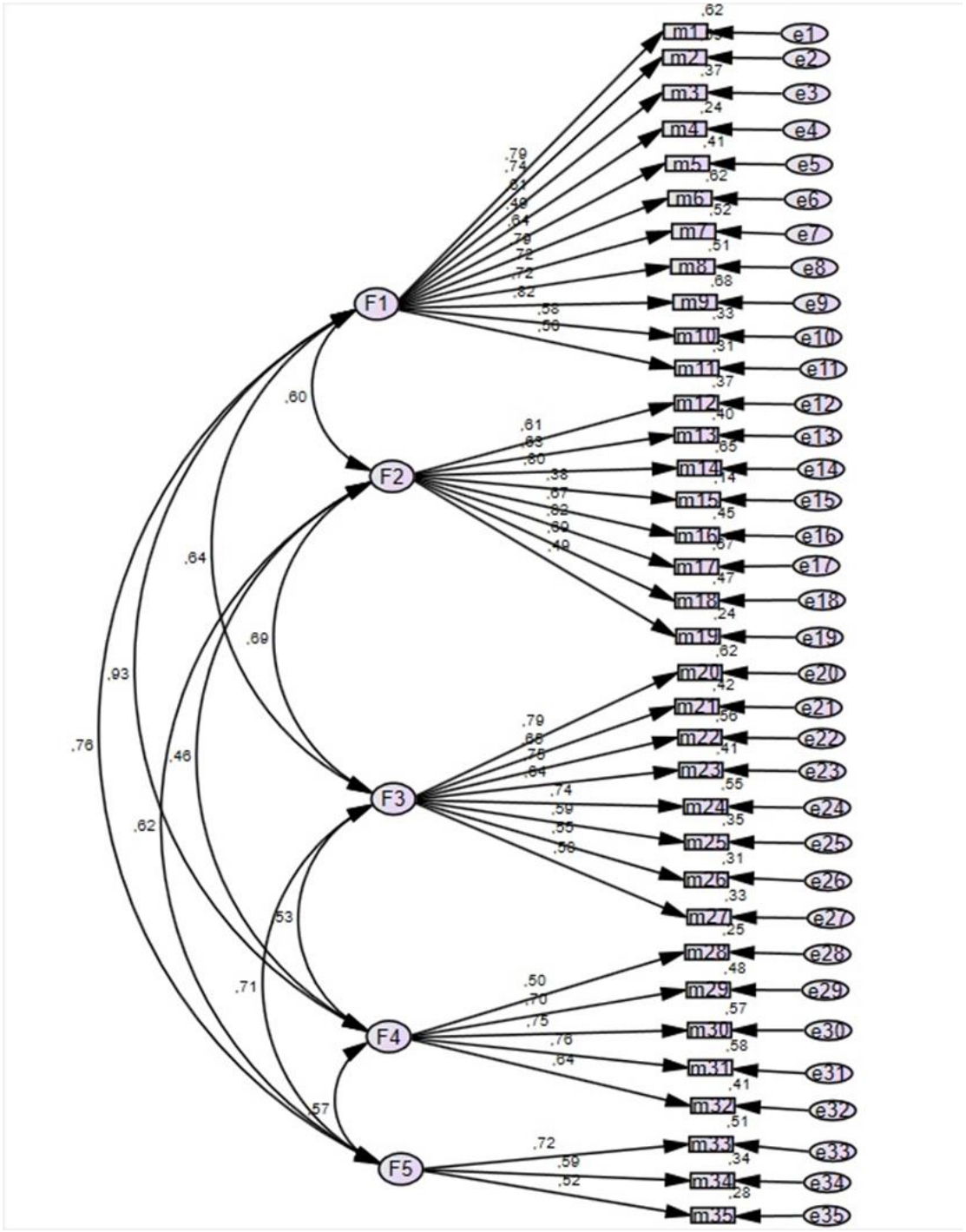

Figure 1. Structural equation modelling for confirmatory factor analysis (AMOS diagram)

Factors related to 35 items (F1, F2, F3, F4, F5) are modeled in the diagram. In the diagram, measurable and observed structures are shown as rectangles, while latent structures that cannot be measured are shown as ellipses. One-way arrows in the model show the regression coefficients and also reveal the effect of one variable on the other. Moreover, two-way arrows show the relationship among the factors (Byrne, 2001). It is necessary to use fit tests to demonstrate the compatibility of the model structure with the data. There are various fit indices used in the literature (Kartal & Bardakçı, 2018; Palancıoğlu et al., 2023,). Information about the fit indices used in this study is presented in Table 6.

Table 6. Fit indices used in confirmatory factor analysis

Model Fit Criteria	**Good Fit Values**	**Acceptable Fit**	**Found Fit Values**
CMIN/SD	$x^2/sd \leq 3$	$x^2/sd \leq 5$	1.79
Comparative Fit Indices			
TLI (NNFI)	0,95≤NNFI	0,90≤NNFI	,920
IFI	0,95≤IFI	0,90≤IFI	,931
CFI	0,95≤CFI	0,90≤CFI	,931
RMSEA	RMSA≤0,05	RMSA≤0,08	,044
Absolute Fit Indices			
GFI	0,90≤ GFI	0,85≤GFI	,932
AGFI	0,90≤AGFI	0,85≤AGFI	,906

Kaynak. (as citied in Kartal and Bardakçı, 2018)

According to the results of the analysis, the CMIN/SD value was found to be a good fit value and within the acceptable reference range. Comparative fit indices (TLI (NNFI), IFI, CFI, RMSEA) were also found to be within the range of good fit and acceptable fit values. When absolute fit indices (GFI, AGFI) were examined, it was seen that the results were within the good and acceptable fit reference range. It was found that all the calculated values were within the good and acceptable fit value range. Therefore, it could be said that the 5-factor structure developed through the utilization of exploratory factor analysis was validated by confirmatory factor analysis. Based on these analyses, it could be claimed that the developed social studies course attitude scale is capable of measuring students' attitudes towards the social studies course.

3.2. Findings Related to Reliability

Reliability is the degree to which a measurement tool is free from errors. It is also expressed as a measurement tool being sensitive and consistent (Sönmez & Alacapınar, 2016, p. 39). Reliability analyses for the factors are presented in Table 7.

Table 7. Reliability test results of the social studies attitude scale

Factor	Number of Items	Cronbach Alpha Internal Consistency Coefficient (α)
Sensitivity	11	,907
Appreciation	9	,879
Motivation	8	,871
Usefulness	5	,737
Responsibility	3	,732
Total	35	,952

As shown in Table 7, Cronbach Alpha values of 5 factors were calculated. Accordingly, the Cronbach Alpha value for the items in the "sensitivity" factor was found as .907; .879 for the items in the "appreciation" factor; .871 for the items in the "motivation" factor; .737 for the items included in the "usefulness" factor; It was also found as .732 for the items in the "responsibility" factor. When the Cronbach Alpha value of the total factors was calculated, it was found to be .952. Reliability coefficient values in the scales above 0.70 are considered high in terms of reliability scores (Büyüköztürk, 2016). Therefore, it can be said that all 5 factors are reliable in terms of Cronbach Alpha value.

4. Conclusions

In the present study, a social studies course attitude scale was developed to determine secondary school students' attitudes towards the social studies course. In the first stage, an item pool consisting of 50 questions was created. 30 experts were invited to examine the question pool to determine content validity of the items. In line with expert opinions and suggestions, analyses were carried out according to Lawshe (1975) and the items were revised.

Exploratory and confirmatory factor analyses were conducted to confirm the validity of the items in the scale. For exploratory factor analysis, KMO value and Bartlett's Tests were utilized to determine the adequacy of the sample size. According to the KMO value of .960 and the Bartlett's test ($p=.000$; $p<.001$) results, the data was found to be significant and the data was found to be sufficient for conducting EFA. Then, the communality of the items was checked, and 15 items with a communality value below 0.45 were removed from the scale. According to the EFA results of the 35-item scale, the items were grouped under 5 factors. These factors were named as "sensitivity", "appreciation", "motivation", "usefulness" and " responsibility".

The first factor was named as "sensitivity" because it measures students' sensitivity to the social studies course, and this factor consists of 11 items. The second factor was named as "appreciation" because it measures the value students attach to the social studies course and consists of 9 items. The third factor was named as "motivation" because it measures the

students' motivation levels towards social studies course, and this factor consists of 8 items. The fourth factor was named as "usefulness" because it measures the students' perceptions of usefulness of the social studies course and this factor consists of 5 items. The fifth factor was named as " responsibility" because it measures the students' level of responsibility in the social studies course. This factor consists of 3 items.

The results of Cronbach Alpha analysis of the scale showed that the items under the factors were consistent with each other (Sensitivity = .907, Appreciation = .879, Motivation = .871, Usefulness = .737, Responsibility = .732). The Cronbach Alpha value of the entire scale was found as .952. A value of Cronbach's α coefficient greater than .70 indicates that the scale is reliable (Kartal & Bardakçı, 2018).

5. Discussion

In the related literature, when the factors of the developed scales examined, there have been no similar studies that named the sub-dimensions as “sensitivity”. On the other hand, similar names or titles for other factors were found in the literature: for the “appreciation” factor (İlhan vd., 2013; Karagül, 2020 ; Kurnaz & Yiğit, 2010; Tufan & Güdek, 2008 ; Ünişen & Demirel, 2018; Varışoğlu et al., 2013; Yaman & Tekin, 2010), for “motivation” factor (Çetin & Çetin, 2019; Kırmızı et al., 2021) and for “usefulness” factor (Yıldızer et al., 2019) and for “responsibility” factor (Bitişli, Dinç, Çetinceli & Kaygısız, 2013; Ötken & Cenkci, 2013; Tatlılıoğlu, 2013) .

The social studies course attitude scale developed by Gömleksiz and Kan (2013) consisted of 29 items and 5 factors (liking, benefit, interest, wishing, and trust). The Cronbach Alpha value for the entire scale was found to be .61. While this scale study is similar in terms of the number of factors and the "utility factor" of the sub-dimensions, it does not show similar findings regarding reliability coefficient. Ulukalın and Topkaya (2017) developed a social studies course attitude scale for 4th grade primary school students and it consisted of 12 items, and all the items were collected under a single factor. In their study, the Cronbach Alpha value for the entire scale was found as .84. Although it had a high reliability like the present study, they were diffirent from each other in terms of factors and items. Çalışkan (2008) developed a social studies course attitude scale in his doctoral dissertation. The scale consisted of 33 items and a 4-factor structure. The Cronbach Alpha reliability coefficient of the scale was found to be .93. It can be said that these findings are similar to the results of this present scale study.

6. Suggestions

According to the findings of the research, it can be claimed that this scale is a reliable measurement tool in terms of factors, and the overall scale as well. This developed scale is a highly reliable scale and consists of 35 items in the form of 5-point Likert type and measures 5 sub-dimensions, which can be used to measure students' attitudes in social studies course. (See Appendix for the final version of the scale)

The following recommendations are proposed to the researchers who will work within the scope of this study:

- This study was conducted without considering criteria such as gender and socio-economic level of the students. It may be suggested that other scale development studies be carried out by taking these factors into consideration and comparing the analyses related to this research.
- This study was conducted with only 7th grade students. It can be applied to different grades and its validity and reliability can be measured.
- The social studies course attitude scale can also be applied to teachers and teacher candidates.

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Declaration of Conflicting Interests and Ethics

The authors declare no conflict of interest. This research was conducted with the permission of Sivas Cumhuriyet University Educational Sciences Research Proposal Ethics Evaluation Board dated 26.05.2023 and numbered E-50704946-100-298722.

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Appendix: Attitude Scale Towards Social Studies Course

SOSYAL BİLGİLER DERSİNE YÖNELİK TUTUM ÖLÇEĞİ

Sevgili Öğrenciler;
Bu çalışma öğrencilerin sosyal bilgiler dersine yönelik tutum ve düşüncelerini ortaya koymak amacıyla yapılmıştır. Anket, bilimsel amaçlı olarak kullanılacaktır. Yanıtlar başka hiç kimse ile paylaşılmayacaktır. Aşağıda verilen maddelerin doğru ve yanlış cevapları yoktur. Maddeler hakkındaki düşüncelerinizi aşağıda verilen; **Kesinlikle Katılmıyorum, Katılmıyorum, Kararsızım, Katılıyorum, Kesinlikle Katılıyorum** seçeneklerinden birine (X) işareti koyarak cevaplandırınız. Sadece bir seçeneği işaretleyiniz. Maddelerin hiçbirini yanıtsız bırakmayınız.
Maddeleri içtenlikle ve samimi olarak işaretlediğiniz için şimdiden teşekkür ederiz.

Sıra No	Maddeler	Kesinlikle Katılmıyorum	Katılmıyorum	Kararsızım	Katılıyorum	Kesinlikle Katılıyorum
1	Sosyal bilgiler dersini ilgiyle dinlerim.					
2	Sosyal bilgiler dersinde işlenen konular bana çok gerçekçi gelir.					
3	Sosyal bilgiler dersinde öğrendiklerimi çok anlamlı buluyorum.					
4	Sosyal bilgiler dersinin gelişimim için önemli olduğunu düşünürüm.					
5	Sosyal bilgiler dersinde öğrendiklerimi faydalı bulurum.					
6	Sosyal bilgiler dersinde öğrenme isteğim artar.					
7	Sosyal bilgiler dersinde zamanın nasıl geçtiğinin farkına varmam.					
8	Sosyal bilgiler dersinde uygulanan etkinlikler ile öğrenmem kolaylaşır.					
9	Sosyal bilgiler dersinde sınıf içi etkinliklerin olması çok hoşuma gidiyor.					
10	Sosyal bilgiler ders saatinin daha fazla olmasını isterim.					
11	Sosyal bilgiler dersine girmekten çok mutluluk duyuyorum.					
12	Sosyal bilgiler dersinin boş geçmesi beni mutsuz eder.					
13	Sosyal bilgiler derslerini sabırsızlıkla beklerim.					
14	Sosyal bilgiler dersine hazırlıklı giderim.					
15	Sosyal bilgiler dersi diğer derslere karşı motivasyonumu arttırır.					
16	Sosyal bilgiler dersinde başka hiçbir şeyle meşgul olmam.					
17	Sosyal bilgiler dersinde kendimi çok istekli hissederim.					
18	Sosyal bilgiler dersi bittikten sonra konuları tekrar yaparım.					
19	Sosyal bilgiler dersi benim için önemlidir.					
20	Sosyal bilgiler dersi doğaya ve çevreye karşı daha bilinçli davranmamı sağlar.					

Sıra No	Maddeler	Kesinlikle Katılmıyorum	Katılmıyorum	Kararsızım	Katılıyorum	Kesinlikle Katılıyorum
21	Sosyal bilgiler dersi ile hayatımı kolaylaştırıcı bilgiler öğreniyorum.					
22	Sosyal bilgiler dersi ile olaylara karşı bakış açım değişti.					
23	Sosyal bilgiler dersi farklılıklara karşı tavrımın değişmesini sağladı.					
24	Sosyal bilgiler dersi arkadaşlık ilişkilerimin gelişmesini sağlar.					
25	Sosyal bilgiler dersi diğer derslere karşı bakış açımın değişmesini sağlar.					
26	Sosyal bilgiler dersi ile sorumluluklarımın farkına varırım.					
27	Sosyal bilgiler dersi ailemle ve çevremle ilişkilerimin daha iyi olmasını sağlar.					
28	Sosyal bilgiler dersi ile başkalarının duygu ve düşüncelerine saygı göstermeyi öğrenirim.					
29	Sosyal bilgiler dersi öğretmenim ile iyi bir bağ kurmamı sağlar.					
30	Sosyal bilgiler dersi ödev yapma sorumluluğumu geliştirdi.					
31	Sosyal bilgiler dersi sayesinde farklı fiziksel özelliklere saygı duyarım.					
32	Sosyal bilgiler dersi sayesinde canlılara ve doğaya karşı daha duyarlı davranırım.					
33	Sosyal bilgiler dersi okul kurallarına uymamı sağlar.					
34	Sosyal bilgiler dersi sayesinde daha disiplinli davranırım.					
35	Sosyal bilgiler dersi sayesinde topluluk önünde kendimi daha iyi ifade edebiliyorum.					