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KEMET Academy: A University Outreach Model for Addressing the Wholeness of Learning in a Rural Context

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Abstract

This work introduces a model of university outreach in rural communities which promotes increasing post-secondary options for rural dwelling African American youth. KEMET (Knowledge and Excellence in Mathematics, Equilibrium, and Technology) Academy is a comprehensive academic enrichment program targeting African American students enrolled in under-resourced schools and communities across Alabama's rural Black Belt region. The group comprised 48 intermediate level students in four counties. Drawing upon professors representing two land grant institutions, KEMET faculty engaged KEMET Scholars in activities designed to enhance skills in reading comprehension and application, mathematics, science, computing, decision-making, as well as health and wellness during a two-week summer program and tri-monthly "Saturday Academies" annually, for over a five year period. Facilitators of the program found it effective in meeting its overall objectives of enhancing the academic and cultural enrichment experiences of rural youth.

Keywords: Knowledge, Excellence, Mathematics, University Outreach, Technology

Introduction

Scholarship and practice initiatives over the past 30 years focused upon factors associated with children at-risk becoming teen parents or drug abusers, entering organizations which promote deviant behavioral standards, becoming physically aggressive or emotionally unstable, or other forms of delinquency. While important these factors, represent only a small portion of the story, rendering remaining issues ignored.

To a great extent, the discussion and research specifically on at-risk African American youth have been restricted to their portrayal as social problems or “problem” youth. Contrarily, some African American children coexist in the same contexts of troubled peers, displaying high levels of competence and cognitive productivity. As a result of few investigations on these healthy and resilient African American youth, little knowledge has been developed related to their motivation; personality norms; psychological, cognitive, identity, and moral development; attitude formation; and relationships with parents, siblings and significant others. Limited research exists about these youth, who despite their economic circumstances, experience success exhibited by feelings of hope and self-worth, resilience and competence, academic achievement, as well as maintenance of overall positive emotional health (Crain & Dunn, 2007; Donnelly, Eburne & Kittleson, 2001; Gopaul-McNicol & Thomas-Presswood, 1998; Phinney, 1990; Smith, 2002).

Knowledge and Excellence in Mathematics, Equilibrium, and Technology (KEMET) Academy targets African American students enrolled in under-resourced Black Belt region Alabama schools. The students in the Black Belt region reside in the poorest counties of the United States, with declining populations that are primarily agricultural with low-density settlement, high unemployment, limited access to educational resources or quality medical care, substandard housing, and high rates of crime (Gibbs, 2003; Zekeri & Habtemariam, 2006). The program seeks to improve the academic achievement and overall success of participants, offering opportunities for learning and personal growth to young residents of the Black Belt. Programmatic sub-goals include: 1) raising the academic achievement levels and graduation rates of children attending schools in under-resourced communities; 2) increasing the number of children from Alabama’s under-resourced schools who pursue post-secondary education or training; 3) raising the number of under-represented minorities pursuing careers perceived as non-traditional; and 4) improving the likelihood that these students will return to their home communities and contribute to the communities’ sustainability and growth. Furthermore, this pilot evaluation yields data identifying factors promoting higher levels of self-efficacy, achievement, and hope among rural dwellers, while informing policies and programs dedicated to increasing opportunities for members of the featured population.

The authors present KEMET Academy as an intervention for rural youth and a competency model based upon the program. Outcomes of the program yielded the development of the KEMET Competencies Associated with Success for Rural Youth (CASRY), a model which may be applied to other university outreach efforts serving similar populations. These competencies included general literacy, computational skills, analytical skills, computer literacy, communication skills, self-evaluation, cultural literacy, goal development, values clarification

and identity, expectations, having two or more non-parent invested adults, global citizenship, and physical and emotional health.

A review of the relevant literature for each program component follows. The authors then present KEMET Academy as an intervention for rural youth and a competency model based upon the program which may be applied to other contexts.

Review of the Literature

The multifaceted nature of this initiative requires review of related elements to place the work in context. The following reviews academic achievement, reading and literacy, mathematics, science, physical health and fitness, and emotional and mental health as it relates to the featured population.

Academic Achievement

Numerous explanations exist for the over-representation of African Americans among those failing to meet academic standards in public schools throughout the United States. This contributes to the under-representation of African Americans in higher education. These explanations range from attending under-resourced schools, to a lack of culturally adept educators (Ladson-Billings, 1996). The intersection of dynamics including race, poverty, and gender contribute to the challenges these children face in high need public schools.

Representing 15% of the nation's youth, African American adolescents, as members of a marginalized group, continue to experience inequities and are disproportionately vulnerable to many of life's harsh realities – realities which may impede their academic achievement, emotional maturity, and physical development (Lewis, 1988; Rogers & Hughes-Lee, 1992). Rural Alabama, despite some improvement in recent years, remains a statistically dismal place to reside for children. The Annie Casey Foundation (2005) measured the rate of rural Alabamian children living in poverty at 24 percent; while 14 percent of children between the ages of 16 and 19 discontinue school before attaining a high school diploma or certificate. Both of these statistics exceed the national average.

In the Black Belt region of Alabama's Lowndes County, where African Americans are the overwhelming majority (73.4%) of residents, Black youth continue to be disproportionately represented in the 20.5% of student drop outs annually, as well as the 471 students who are suspended every year. The 79.5% who do graduate see a gloomy horizon with few economic opportunities. Further, the families to which these youth belong fall at the lower end of the median household income range, with an average income of \$24,967 – over \$13,000 less than the state's average of \$34,135 (U.S. Census Bureau, 2004). As is characteristic of Alabama's Black Belt rural counties, Macon County's median household income is lower at \$23,378 – over \$14,000 less than the state's average (U.S. Census Bureau, 2000). Russell County's median household income is \$29,680 – over \$7,000 less than the state's average. Lee County, though boasting a higher than average median household income at \$34,660, still has its African American residents representing the lowest median household income in the area (U.S. Census Bureau, 2004).

When we consider that over 30 % of Macon County's and 35 % of Lowndes County's adult residents over the age of 25 lack a high school diploma or its equivalent, it is clear that these children are in a precarious position. In 2003, only 19 and 22 % of Alabama's fourth graders scored above the reading and math proficiency scores, respectively. As one would suspect, the prospects don't improve by the time these children enter the eighth grade and diminish even further as it relates to math competency, where they exceed the reading and math proficiency scores by rates of only 22 and 16 %. Even more frightening is the %age of students who were not successful in passing the Alabama High School Graduation Exam (AHSGE). For example, over 30 % of the students tested in Lowndes County's high schools failed the math portion of the exam in 2006. Furthermore, the racial and economic isolation symptomatic of rural communities means that participants are rarely exposed to models of academic success within their rural contexts.

Phinney (1990) identifies positive identity development as a mediator between poverty and behavioral outcomes, such as academic grade point average, delinquency, and psychological well-being for ethnic minorities. It is also directly associated with higher levels of resilience, greater self-awareness, positive self-esteem and greater overall academic success. In regards to self awareness and esteem, assisting their children with developing cultural connectedness is one of the most important parental tasks identified by African American parents (Bowman & Howard, 1985). Seaborn-Thompson and Peebles-Wilkins (1992) report that social connectedness provides affirmation that increases self-worth and the capacity to cope with negative self-imagery, racial hostility, and rejection by the larger society. The extent to which African American youth value themselves has a substantial influence on whether they are able to develop self-efficacy and resilience in the face of negative life events, barriers, and societal devaluation. Such characteristics promise to increase the likelihood that they set and attain academic and personal goals.

Though there continues to be a great deal of conflict related to which factors contribute most to or promote academic achievement among rural dwelling children, some Scholars do identify parallel factors (Hodgkinson, 2003; Hodgkinson & Obarakpor, 2007; Seaton, 2007; Yang & Fetsch, 2007). They agree that rural school aged children benefit from adequate facilities and materials, well trained teachers, educational stimulation, and exposure to an education supplying a foundation for successful lives. Children need their teachers and families to believe in their abilities, support their development, inspire confidence in their abilities, and believe that regardless of impoverished educational environments that they can be successful.

Reading and Literacy

Reading and comprehension lie at the foundation of academic endeavors. According to the Lowell Bennion Community Service Center (2007) many students' reluctance to read and comprehend information stems from lack of exposure to reading materials to which they personally connect. All of us are more likely to read and struggle to understand difficult material if we see ourselves reflected in the literature. Some of the major barriers to reading include lack of ownership and connection to materials that are selected for reading, as well as frustration. Hence, not only do students need to connect to the materials, but materials need to be at the appropriate level for students. When learning to read, a student's lack of confidence in his or her

ability may also hinder learning. By creating an environment where the student feels safe and supported, they are more willing to take risks to read. Boredom with the same routines and stories pose as another reading barrier. Opportunities need to be provided to mitigate these potential obstacles to reading success to provide students with better conditions for learning that strengthen reading ability.

Mathematics

Inequities remain across racial, gender, and socio-economic lines in mathematics achievement (NAEP, 2007). Hence, the vision described by the National Council of Teachers of Mathematics (NCTM, 2000) aims to empower all students to become quantitatively literate problem solvers. Students can be empowered by actively constructing knowledge, making connections to the real-world, and using mathematics as a tool to examine social justice (Banks & Banks, 1995; NCTM, 2000). Proportional reasoning is often identified as the common thread in middle school mathematics as it “consolidates elementary school mathematics knowledge and ... forms a cornerstone for high school mathematics and science” (Lamon, 1996, p. 172).

Science

Encouraging students to develop positive attitudes toward science is a critical part of learning the subject (Claxton, 1989; Head, 1989; Joranovic & King, 1998). Jovanovic and King (1998) explain that students’ attitudes are linked to their achievement in science, as well as motivation to persist in high school science courses and beyond (Kahle & Meece, 1994; Steinkamp & Mehr, 1983; Stoner 1981). Yet, national trends indicate that middle school marks the period when some students lose interest in the subject (Jones, Mullis, Raizen, Weiss, & Weston, 1992). Advocates of science education reform believe that to better engage students in science, learning must transcend a traditional textbook-focused approach, where students learn by listening and reading; to a performance-based (i.e., hands-on) approach, where learning is an active process involving inquiry and exploration (American Association for the Advancement of Science [AAAS], 1990; National Research Council [NRC], 1996). These recommendations are predicated on the tenet that if students are given opportunities to actively engage in science, positive attitudes towards science and higher levels of scientific efficacy will be fostered (Hofstein & Lunetta, 1982, Kahle, Parker, Rennie, & Riley, 1993; Okebukola, 1986).

African American students from under-resourced communities tend to discontinue their matriculation in non-compulsory science courses earlier and at greater rates than their European American counterparts. Primary obstacles for these students include inadequate education, low expectations from teachers, anti-intellectual peer pressure, and a cultural gap between the world of research and that of their families (Culotta, 1993). Addressing this leak in the science pipeline requires early intervention.

Research has shown that students in middle school begin to form opinions about their future careers. Educators may intervene with students during the middle school or transition years to encourage interest in science by: showing them that science will be useful in the future; exposing them to science and engineering role models of the same sex and /or ethnic

background; encouraging parents and peers to excel in science; and providing opportunities for confidence building and enhancing existing strengths.

Parker and Gerber (2000) in their research of science intervention on middle school student achievement support the need for reformation of science curriculum as recommended by the National Research Council (1996). Essential components of a science curriculum are appropriate content based on national goals for science education and an inquiry-based, active learning instructional method. Both of these curriculum components are considered necessary for the development of student achievement and positive attitudes toward science (Parker & Gerber, 2000).

Physical Health and Fitness

Obesity and being overweight are major risks that contribute to many health concerns plaguing Americans. Sixty-four percent of Americans are overweight, defined as holding a Body Mass Index (BMI) of 25 or more (U.S. Federal Food and Drug Administration, 2002). Alabama is identified as one of the top five most obese states in the country. According to the Annual Report for the Alabama Department of Public Health (2005), 65% of Alabama adults are overweight. Nearly 44% of adolescents are at risk for being overweight based on the Alabama Obesity Task Force's report (Alabama Department of Public Health [ADPH], 2008).

Contributing to rising obesity problems among youth in the State of Alabama are alarming statistics that indicate that 81% of youth are not receiving adequate, "moderate" daily physical activity. In addition, approximately 59% do not participate in physical education courses in school (ADPH, 2008). The Alabama Obesity Task Force notes that nearly 86% of high school students do not eat 5 or more fruits and vegetables daily. Consequently, we see a higher prevalence of obesity-related illnesses, including heart disease, hypertension and diabetes among children. Consequently, heart disease, an illness related to obesity, is the number one cause of death in Alabama, accounting for approximately 29% of deaths in the state during 2002 (Kochanek, Murphy, Anderson & Scott, 2004).

The crisis of obesity demonstrates the importance of starting exercise habits at an early age and encouraging a balanced diet. Undernourishment, regardless of weight, negatively influences children's school behaviour and performance, particularly concentration and performing complex mental functions (Center on Hunger, Poverty, and Nutrition Policy, 1994). Also, because of the link between stress, lack of exercise and "comfort eating," it is critical to include stress management strategies in promoting physical and mental wellness.

In terms of physical wellness, research suggests that recess increases children's cognitive performance via increasing student attention (Pellegrini & Bohn, 2005). This counters arguments minimizing the importance of physical activity and that seek to replace recess and physical education with increased class time for courses (Kean, 1990) such as mathematics and science. Yet, the Society for Neuroscience (SFN), (2007) reports that exercise influences the hippocampus, resulting in increased memory and learning (SFN, 2007). Research further suggests that physical activity plays a vital role in overall brain function and maintenance and that the brain generates new cells throughout the lifespan (SFN, 2007).

Emotional and Mental Health

The development of positive emotional health and well-being is what children need for optimal psychosocial development (Crain & Dunn, 2007). But the management of emotional and mental health often is ignored in rural communities. The stigma attached to mental health services further limits willing African American parents and caregivers in pursuing mental health interventions for their children (Corrigan et al., 2007; Simmons, Huddleston-Casas & Berry, 2007). A tendency to perceive mental or emotional challenge or stress as a weakness, further contributes to lack of utilization of mental health services that can prevent emotional and mental dysfunction and serve as intervention for behavioral problems (Corrigan et al., 2007; Gyamfi, Keens-Douglas & Medin, 2007).

The mental health community and most recently the educational community have made attempts at identifying factors that contribute to the development of positive emotional well-being (Reading, 2007). The ability of an individual to successfully express emotions appropriately would be an indication that positive emotional health had been achieved (Donnelly, Eburne & Kittleson, 2001). However, a question that is most often asked is: What are the factors that contribute to positive emotional health? Can they be identified and incorporated into parental interactions and an educational mental health intervention to facilitate emotional development? According to Smith (2002) there are several factors that contribute to this development, occurring at individual, familial, and societal levels. When deconstructed and viewed individually, these factors have multiple influences. The community factors noted to have significant influence on the development of the child's emotional health can include such things as having external support, good housing, basic needs being met, and schools. Within the community, opportunities for achievement and involvement in academic and leisure activities can have a profound impact on emotional well-being. With each of these opportunities to contribute and participate in the community, the child develops skills such as managing strong feelings, resolving conflict, as well as making and maintaining friendships. These are developed amidst building a positive sense of mental health. While the community plays a role, contributing factors to the emotional health of a child are the parents or guardians and caregivers. The familial factors that contribute to this well-being include support, affection, lack of tension, and involvement in family activities. However, the personal factors of a child can also be profound in the promotion of emotional health. Personal factors that have been identified as contributing to emotional well being include good health, a positive self-concept and identity, language development, communication, problem solving skills, biological resilience, secure attachment, temperament, exposure to pro-social behavior and IQ (Crain & Dunn, 2007; Smith, 2002). It was also noted that personal factors such as being female, humor, religious faith, and feeling in control could also be significant influential factors in promoting positive emotional health of a child.

The multiple factors that contribute to a child's emotional wellness are each significant. To dismiss contributing elements and attempt to measure the positive emotional health in the absence of a mental or physical illness would be inadequate. However, in its true essence, positive emotional health and well-being should be viewed in terms of the child's ability and capacity to live a full life.

Methods

The initial participant group comprised 48 students entering the sixth and seventh grades. Participants were recruited from four rural counties in the Black Belt region of Alabama. Letters and telephone calls of introduction were made to superintendents, school principals, and guidance counsellors. We solicited support from area community leaders. After approval was secured from the county superintendents, school principals were instructed to select 15 students from the identified school with 5 having C/D grade averages, 5 holding B/C averages, and 5 earning A/B averages. Students with diagnosed severe learning disabilities or conduct disorders were excluded from participation. The resulting group comprised 28 sixth graders and 20 seventh graders. The second year of the KEMET Academy Summer Program experienced some attrition, with 22 seventh graders and 12 eighth graders. One of the participants had a diagnosed learning disability and physical development challenge, two were diagnosed with juvenile diabetes, and one was diagnosed with kidney disease. The parents or guardians of each child participated in an orientation meeting held at the school and completed informed consent forms along with their children.

Journaling was used to record experiences and reflections. Journaling prompts researchers to be more reflexive (Janesick, 1999; Mertens, 2009) and facilitates “deepening knowledge of whatever subject matter the researcher takes part in,” while serving as a member check for one’s thoughts (Janesick, 1999, p. 522). Journal writing allows “individuals [to] become connoisseurs of their own thinking and reflection patterns, and indeed their own understanding of their work...” (p. 506, 1999). Other sources of data included letters from parents and class assignments.

Intervention

This intervention pilot targeted the academic skill development of KEMET Academy participants in the following areas: reading comprehension and literacy; mathematics; computing and science; visual arts; emotional and mental health, and finally, physical health and fitness. The curriculum units have diverse thematic concentrations in an effort to enhance the Scholar’s exposure to curricular content as required by the State of Alabama. Over a three year period the thematic threads included foci on rural West and Central Alabama, the development of the United States from 1400 through 1959, and science. The faculty developed each topical area to focus on some aspect of the theme. Since 2004, for two weeks each summer, KEMET Scholars attended rigorous classes and seminars for six hours daily, Monday through Friday. The classes were held on the campus of a public, land grant university in Alabama. The Scholars also participated in quarterly Saturday Academies which focused on one of the target areas and included at least one hour of recreational activity. Because the targeted rural communities reflect statistics suggesting that certain populations experience disproportionate cases of obesity and juvenile diabetes, the program integrates components focusing on increasing self-efficacy, self-awareness, and wellness. The intervention’s academic components were chosen based on a review of the students’ academic records and standardized aptitude test scores. The academic courses included reading comprehension and literacy, mathematics, computing and science and art entitled, *Myself in Literature*, *Computing and Mathematics*, and *Visual Arts*. These were

supported by the physical health and fitness class, Healthy Hearts, as well as an emotional and mental health component, Learning for Life. A description of each course follows.

Reading Comprehension and Literacy: Myself in Literature

Students read literary works and participated in discussions that sought to expand their comprehension of literature which reflected their experiences. They developed their own stories in writing and presented rationales for story dynamics. The specific objectives of the Myself in Literature course was to: 1) increase students' reading comprehension skills; 2) promote knowledge of self and develop cultural literacy through literature; and 3) expose them to reading materials that promote deductive and inductive reasoning skill development. Texts were chosen with special emphasis on cultural relevance and age specificity. These factors increased Scholars' engagement in the course and its related activities. The following represent the Scholars' reflections which best exemplify some their success experiences in Reading Comprehension and Literacy: Myself in Literature.

11th Grader, Lowndes Co., Female:

I remember when I had to write one poem about myself and another about nature. This helped me learn about the different types of poems.

10th Grader, Tallapoosa Co., Female:

Today we are in North Carolina. We visited the museum of the Cherokee Indian. We learned how to say "hello" and sing Amusing Grace in Cherokee. After we left there, we had a picnic. It was very nice.

Through exposure to poetry and another language, the students moved beyond their classroom experience in the rural setting. This enrichment promises to enhance future learning in regards to literacy.

Science: Principles of Rocketry

In the science class, Principles of Rocketry, Scholars: 1) learned and applied the basic principles of how humans explore outer space; 2) investigated the three laws of motion with straws, paper, scissors, and tape; 3) constructed a paper rocket and rocket balloon powered by air generated in the lungs; 4) designed lessons about rocketry; and 5) built and launched rockets powered by small engines.

KEMET Scholars were administered a questionnaire at the beginning of the camp about physical science based on concepts from the state standards for students in the 5th grade. The questions solicited answers based on forces and motion, which is part of the National Science Education Standard (NSES), Physical Science and the Alabama Course of Study (ALCOS) standards for forces and motion in 5th grade science. Student's responses showed that they lacked an understanding of the relationship of forces and motion as it related to the basic concept of how objects move and travel a distance in space.

By learning more about forces, such as gravity, KEMET students were able to explain why a marble falls faster than a piece of paper and why you weigh different amounts on different

planets. Questionnaire data suggests that students were more excited about science by the end of each summer camp.

Students were free to manipulate materials, discover, and explore, as well as pursue questions and ideas. Students recorded observations and data, working either individually or in small groups. The instructor assumed the role of facilitator, observing, asking questions, and making suggestions.

In the concept's introduction, under the direction of the instructor, students organized data they collected and looked for patterns that appeared in regards to forces and motion. In concept application students were given a new situation or problem to which they applied the information they learned through discovery and research. This phase usually involved additional hands-on activities that reinforced earlier learning.

KEMET science proved successful in that students were taught in an inquiry-discovery classroom. Hands on activities were used and integrated with science content. Lesson plans designed by the instructor utilized the learning cycle model. This model approaches teaching and learning via student involvement in the types of thinking and inquiry that constructivists argue facilitates productive learning (Martin, Sexton, Franklin & Gerlovich, 2005). The following illustrate the Scholars' reflections related to their work in Science.

11th Grader, Lowndes Co., Female:

I remember my first year when I learned about the different ecosystems and how plants and animals interact in nature. I learned about fish adaptations and how butterflies are adapted to their environment.

10th Grader, Lowndes Co., Female:

In geographical information systems, I learned how to measure distance between cities. This information increased my knowledge about social studies and GIS. When we got to South Carolina, we got into groups to complete projects. This is an example of Umoja (Unity).

These students' inclusion of science related topics in their journals suggest their engagement with the summer program's curriculum in the area. Given the scarcity of racial minorities in this field, the success of the initiative to spark interest in the discipline is commendable.

Computing and Mathematics

Students explored various facets of Alabama's eighth and ninth grade curriculum, including algebraic reasoning, geometry, and data analysis. Hands on activities introduced the concepts of ratio and proportion. Examination of quilts and quilt making were used to introduce geometric concepts. Specific objectives of the Mathematics course included increasing students' quantitative literacy, flexible problem solving development, and proportional reasoning skills. The Scholars also participated in a "Math Bowl" which encouraged the girls and boys to work in teams. The majority of the Scholars appeared to be intimidated by Mathematics, including simple computational skills which they should have mastered three to four years earlier.

Additionally, the Scholars worked with university computer science and software engineering graduate and undergraduate students for one hour daily to review personal productivity software, computer technology, and to be introduced to website creation and development. The participants cooperatively created a website documenting their experiences while exploring the culture and history of Alabama. The Scholars also were introduced to a program, EthnoMathematics, in which they reviewed and were introduced to the mathematical concepts of transformational geometry, ratios, proportion, angles, iteration, geometric sequence, Cartesian coordinates, logarithms, 4-fold symmetry, and Culturally Situated Design. EthnoMathematics entailed learning mathematics while investigating different eras of history and cultural aspects of the subject. One specific assignment looked at “cornrow braiding” and its connections to transformational geometry to instruct the students in concepts of scale, rotation, symmetry, and iteration.

The lessons for computer sessions were designed to increase students’ competency in computing and technical efficacy. They completed assignments related to African American culture which were presented by the students in Microsoft Word and Powerpoint. Units were prepared to instill in participants the importance of respecting the rights of all people and to prepare them for future leadership. Computing sessions also integrated broader program goals which sought to increase students’ problem solving skills, computing and mathematics efficacy, and self efficacy in terms of public presentation of their projects.

During the 5th year of the summer enrichment programming, the KEMET Scholars’ performance improved over previous years and required less direct instruction. For the majority of students, the computing professor noted changes in cognitive and emotional maturity or the chronological stages of older Scholars, which is required to effectively problem solve, prioritize, and focus on the detailed task oriented activities assigned.

Unfortunately, for those activities that required pre-existing foundational mathematical skills such as basic Geometry, 8 of the younger Scholars exhibited little persistence and would often become distracted themselves or a distraction for their peers. One application utilized transformation geometry and iteration (i.e. Cornrow Curves). All of the students lacked the foundational background to complete any information on their pre-test activities, which assessed basic geometrical topics (i.e. reflection, iteration, rotation, etc.). However, the post-test results indicated marked improvement with the majority (27 out of 34) of the students acquiring some knowledge of these concepts and exhibiting the ability to apply them.

In relationship to basic computing activities, many of the students were below expected grade level in competencies that support computing (i.e. keyboarding). Yet a few of the students were well versed in these skills. Despite diminished preparation in basic mathematic and computation concepts, the majority of students performed well in creative and problem solving activities required in computing fields. This indicates that students need to strengthen their mathematical backgrounds. Despite this, the computing instructors found that many of the students were creative and possessed the cognitive capacity to pick up new activities quickly when they were culturally centered.

Another method employed was to direct the students in creating web pages utilizing end-user programming techniques. This is a strategy utilized to train novice programmers to build their concepts creatively and systematically without imposing the barriers of having to learn the underlying programming language. With this technique, all of the students were able to create basic webpage's and some of the students with high aptitudes for computing technology were able to present structurally pleasing presentations in web technologies as well as in Microsoft PowerPoint for presentations on their work during the Academy.

The following shares one Scholar's reflection exemplifying her experiences in Computing and Mathematics.

11th Grader, Lowndes Co., Female:

I remember when I worked with geometric shapes. From this, I gained knowledge about the different patterns and shapes that you can form. I also remember my first year at Camp KEMET when I learned how to create a video game. From this, I learned that technology is becoming very important in the world and in our lives.

Like the science segment of the curricula, the computing and mathematics component drew students into the application of these fields and their importance in daily life. Such an approach has yielded the above student's appreciation for these disciplines.

Visual Arts

The goals and objectives of the visual arts class entitled, Art and Culture, included: 1) art appreciation, 2) the creative process 3) art production and 4) enhancement of artistic efficacy. Scholars were introduced to several concepts and vocabulary pertaining to the visual arts. University pre-service educators worked with Scholars in small groups to provide individualized instruction, demonstrating each lesson in detail and verbally encouraging the students. The goals and objectives of the visual arts class were introduced via the three following lessons:

Quilts of Alabama: Composition and Design. Using visual examples (art appreciation) of traditional European (symmetrical designs and compositions) and African-American quilts created in Gee's Bend Alabama (asymmetrical designs and compositions) the concepts of symmetry and asymmetry were explored. Scholars demonstrated their understanding of art and related mathematical concepts through their planning and creation of symmetrical or asymmetrical paper quilt collages composed of primary and secondary colors.

Weaving. Ghana's Asante ceremonial woven Kente cloth was incorporated into the second lesson. Scholars followed detailed instructions and employed fine motor skills, creating a simulated woven 'cloth' of yarn using a loom of drinking straws. Finally, the Scholars viewed the educational video, "Five African Art Facts," from the Virginia Museum of Fine Arts. In concert, these activities promoted the Scholars' understanding of the utility and types of traditional African art and materials. After discussion of the video, Scholars demonstrated knowledge acquired from the video into the creation of symmetrical or asymmetrical collages inspired by African masks.

At the conclusion of each year's summer camp, Scholars' artwork was displayed in the gallery of the University's Art department while KEMET was in progress and later in a gallery style exhibition during the culminating activity. These exhibitions fostered a sense of accomplishment, increased Scholars' self-esteem and garnered comments of recognition and appreciation from family members and viewers.

The following represent one pre-service educator's and a Scholar's reflections on their success experiences in Visual Arts. They include demonstration and reinforcement of knowledge learned, including feelings of empowerment, pride, increased self-esteem, and community.

Undergraduate Pre-service Educator:

... two of the boys that I taught how to straw weave were teaching their friend how to do it because he hadn't started yet and all of the teachers were helping other students... I expected to have to teach each individual student how to straw weave, but they proved me wrong and ended up taking the responsibility to teach a classmate and looked like the(y) even enjoyed it!

Noteworthy here is the students' utilization of peer mentoring in helping another student learn.

9th Grader, Lowndes Co., Male:

Today we arrived in Washington D.C. We got to tour the capital and walk. We walked to the Smithsonian, and walked from floor to floor just admiring the art work.

The clear articulation of appreciation for architecture offers a demonstration of the interest held by the student related to visual artwork. Such experiences are bound to supplement their educations given the limited attention to the visual arts in public school settings.

Emotional and Mental Health: Learning for Life Skills

These group sessions were an essential component of the KEMET Academy program. The one hour, tri-weekly group sessions enabled group leaders to motivate and interact with students. Group leaders with backgrounds similar to those of students served as role models and shared their personal paths to success, including obstacles. During these group sessions, through various activities, discussions, and role-plays, students explored and learned: skills in communication and cooperation; gender issues and relationships; time management; decision making; problem prevention and problem-solving; self-esteem and self-control; as well as value identification; peer leadership and team building; violence prevention: conflict identification, management and resolution; and stress management. Group sessions focused on themes such as: "The Law & Me," "Ethnic Heritage and Cultural Identity," "What Is Freedom?," "Respecting Differences," "Who am I ... Who do I Want to Become," "Inter-gender Relationships," and "How Do I Say No?" The lessons were designed to instill in participants, the importance of respecting the rights of all people and to prepare them for leadership. The group sessions sought to accomplish heightened student awareness of social and life skills needed to: 1) achieve self-sufficiency and enhance personal development; 2) identify guiding values and ethics; 3) increase self-efficacy; 4) increase self-awareness and self-knowledge; 5) acquire a context for

understanding the importance of their own knowledge, skills, and overall education; and 6) identify characteristic features of mental health and wellness.

For the past five years, KEMET Scholars have participated in peer sharing and process-oriented groups. Foci of the groups centered upon many of the Scholars' developmental concerns and experiences they had between the 6th and 10th grades. Age specific tendencies have been observed as both a challenge and success for the group. They initially had difficulty accepting alternative perspectives about topics (i.e. conflict resolution strategies). However, as the Scholars matured in age and life experience, they seemed more empowered to share in groups and present themselves positively. An observed success included the increased level of insight Scholars gained from being exposed to life issues expressed in the group. Another distinctive marker of success was Scholars' ability to introduce themselves, articulate personal philosophies to the group, and complete group tasks without interruption and minimal formal structure. While they are still teenagers, the Learning for Life class allowed the Scholars to demonstrate self-determination and served as a venue conducive to their being capable of demonstrating ways in which their positive personal identity formed. Demonstrations of Emotional and Mental Health or Learning for Life are as follows:

10th Grader, Montgomery Co., Female:

I have learned that being successful is very important. I have learned that I have to set a goal and strive to reach it.

11th Grader, Lowndes Co., Female:

I learned that it's nothing wrong with being black.. . I learned that culture has a unique background to it. Also, I learned that we are all not the same. So this is how this principle relates to what I learned today.

11th Grader, Tallapoosa Co., Female:

I learned that back in the 1800's people couldn't vote. Also, I learned about how women couldn't really do anything back then either. This relates to me, because I'm a young woman. The women's right was something that relates to me. That's my history, because if it wasn't for them, I wouldn't be able to vote. Also, I wouldn't be able to get a job. In conclusion, I wouldn't be even be able to leave the house...

10th Grader, Macon Co., Male:

Today we visited Charleston, SC. We toured a few historical sites. The most memorable sight was Drayton Hall. I learned that the colors indicated what regiment each soldier was from. During the wars, self-determination was provided by the American soldiers to distinguish themselves from others. This shows that they wanted to stand out from each other and not get confused. This relates to me because, at times, I should stand out from others to be exclusive.

The learning prompted understanding of history and how this relates to their current places in society. This understanding generated pride and self esteem.

Physical Health and Fitness: Healthy Hearts

As we assessed the academic needs of participants in the program, we were cognizant of the social, physical, and emotional balance necessary to support academic success. Consequently, we decided to implement a holistic model of academic and social enrichment including attention to physical wellness. The Healthy Hearts component was designed to promote physical health, psychological wellness, and emotional balance in students with the intention of having a direct impact on their educational success. The goals of the Healthy Hearts sessions included: 1) introducing culturally embedded physical activity and food preparation practices; 2) improving strength and flexibility; and 3) enhancing stress identification and management skills. Specific objectives of the Healthy Hearts course were to: 1) increase students' knowledge of physical, psychological, and nutritional risk factors for being overweight or obese; 2) promote effective problem-solving and stress management skills; and 3) increase students' daily physical activity.

KEMET Academy incorporated the recommended sixty minutes of daily physical activity required for a healthy child (Department of Health and Human Services, 2007). As an element of the Healthy Hearts initiative, yoga was incorporated into each session. The benefits of yoga include strengthening the muscles, increasing flexibility, and promoting emotional well being. Science was infused into each yoga session, via sharing the specific health benefits of the varied yoga poses and how they affect the body. To complement yoga practice, West African dance was taught to the Scholars during the final minutes of each class. The goal of this segment of the Healthy Hearts course was to introduce Scholars to ancient traditions, yoga and traditional African dance, as vigorous sources of exercise and tools to promote cultural awareness and global citizenship. These practices were coupled with a focus upon linking the benefits of both biology and health.

Reintroduction to play was also incorporated during these sessions. The many demands of middle school students to become young adults minimize the attraction of physical play. Hence, the male and female Scholars were introduced to non-competitive outdoor activities, such as Double Dutch and single rope jumping, walking and team building exercises. The following represent the Scholars' reflections on their success experiences in physical health and fitness.

11th Grader, Macon Co., Male:

I remember the first year where we learned African dance. We made up our own dance for the graduation ceremony and performed it. That was scary but fun and healthy.

10th Grader, Macon Co., Female:

I have learned that being healthy is very important.

Given the rates of obesity in this community, early understanding of the importance of physical activity is critical. Such healthy practice benefits both the body and the mind.

Keystone Intervention Exemplars

Scholars and parents reflected on their overall experiences. These include a demonstration and reinforcement of knowledge learned, feelings of empowerment, pride, increased self-esteem, and community.

10th Grader, Lee Co., Female:

Thank you KEMET for helping to prepare me to reach my full potential. KEMET Academy has taught me how to network by forcing me to step out of my comfort zone and reach out to other Scholars and professors. KEMET Academy has connected me to a mentor...who always makes herself available to me. She offers great advice, checks up on my academic achievement and is a positive role model. I have also improved my time management skills since becoming a KEMET Scholar. These skills have truly come in handy because I recently enrolled in a high school with a very rigorous curriculum. I had to put on these skills to keep up with assignments and adhere to my due dates.

Parent of a 10th Grader, Macon Co., Female:

I [wish] to express my sincere appreciation for Camp KEMET Academy. My daughter has been a KEMET Scholar, since 6th grade and the opportunities afforded her have been awesome. Being a KEMET Scholar has benefited me ... in three major ways. Initially, she was given the opportunity to connect with and glean from the expertise and knowledge of outstanding professional black women. This was a major plus for her in that she is an aspiring paediatrician. Seeing and being exposed to black women who possess such knowledge was extremely motivational for her and began to increase her self-confidence as she began to enter junior high school. She received the encouragement and confirmation that she needed to pursue her goals with confidence. Secondly, ... I was afforded the opportunity to travel to Connecticut to attend a "Sisters of the Academy Writing Retreat." At this retreat she met professional women aspiring to achieve doctorate degrees. It was then that she was introduced to a professional mentor. Her mentor has continued to check on her for the past three years. Her dedication to ... and her academic development has been quite inspiring for me also! Being a young black student from a "Black Belt" county can be somewhat limiting. However, Camp KEMET has allowed her... to go beyond the limits, giving her experiences that her father and I could not have afforded.

10th Grader, Lowndes Co., Female:

What has KEMET done for me? 1) KEMET has helped me start facing the fear of speaking before people. During my first year at KEMET, we were always confronted with being able to get up and present various projects we created or wrote during class. We also had to present a summary to the parents on the last day. Before being mentored by mentors of KEMET, I was scared to standup before people and speak. Today, I feel more empowered to stand and speak before people. 2) KEMET helps to prepare me for school and college. This past summer KEMET allowed me to go on the Knowledge Bus Tour. This tour helped me to see history in a more real way. I am more prepared in my history class because as we discuss some of the things, people, or places, I can understand it better because I was able to see and learn about the actual site this summer. 3) KEMET also shows me that I can do anything when I put my mind to it. After being around other Scholars, I realize that I have some weaknesses. Well, KEMET [doesn't] allow me to use that as an excuse. The mentors grouped us so that we can learn from the strengths of our teammates.

Overall, students and parents perceived the initiative as beneficial to their personal growth and learning. The longitudinal nature to the program resulted in strong bonds and a sense of community for all involved.

KEMET Competencies Associated with Success for Rural Youth

Scholars continue to find how African American rural students achieve lower average test scores, are less likely to pursue post-secondary education, earn lower wages, inherit less, and transition into higher social strata at lower rates. Over 10 years ago, Phinney and colleagues (1990) identified several factors that promote enhanced competencies in youth living in under-resourced environments or who are at-risk. Positive identity development, greater self-awareness, cultural connectedness, and self-value served as contributors to overall achievement and success of adolescents (Phinney et al, 1990; Seaborn-Thompson and Peebles-Wilkins, 1992; and Bowman and Howard, 1985).

The research team adapted their experiences in facilitating the aforementioned courses to create the KEMET Competencies Associated with Success for Rural Youth (CASRY). These include General Literacy, which involves the ability to read, comprehend, and apply what one has read. The second competency, Computational Skills, involves being able to manipulate numbers, figures, measurements, and apply basic mathematic principles. Analytical Skills, identified as the third competency, includes being able to examine, categorize, and integrate information before and while making decisions or negotiating circumstances. The fourth competence, Computer Literacy, entails having the capacity to utilize computing and other technological advances to manage tasks, challenges, and enhance creativity. Communication Skills, the fifth competency, involves the ability to share thoughts clearly and accurately, including being able to question adults or other people in authority respectfully. Skillfully managing differences with others in a way that results in a positive outcome for all parties concerned is a beneficial skill to possess in social, academic, or employment settings. Lack of this skill contributes to the challenges many youth in this population identify. The sixth competency, Self-Evaluation, is the ability to reflect on one's behavior, contributions, and behavioral strengths or weaknesses. This can result in implementation of new behaviors, skills, functioning, and navigation of challenging environments. The seventh competency, Cultural Literacy, involves being aware of other cultures, practices, and value systems, as well as respecting differences and acknowledging parallels within and between groups. Young people from environments such as the Scholars often live and learn in monolithic environments with little opportunity for exposure to other cultures and groups. Goal Development, the eighth competency, involves having the capacity to: develop viable short-term and long-term goals; identify the steps to reach them; predict possible barriers; and prepare strategies to avoid or overcome those barriers should they present themselves. Values Clarification and Identity, the ninth competency, ensures that young people are aware of issues and values such as working hard, saving money, and respecting others. In order for youth to set realistic goals within the boundaries established by their families, communities, and society, it is important that there is guidance provided regarding the specific expectations from these entities. The tenth competency of Expectations may be interpreted by a parent or other significant adult. This is supported by the eleventh competency of having two or more non-parent invested adults. The concept of investment suggests that adults have a deeper level of concern and intently recognize the

interconnection between success in their lives and the lives of young people to whom they are committed. The twelfth competency is Global Citizenship. Merging of cultures is not only occurring within the boundaries of the United States, but across continents. If children are unable to interact with and understand cultures that are different than theirs, their futures will be restricted. The Scholars live in predominantly low-income, racially monolithic, rural communities and attend schools with few economic or human resources. In many of the high schools of these communities, a large majority of students never take a foreign language course. In at least one of the counties represented, a Spanish course is offered via distance learning – not considered one of the most effective methods of language instruction. Overall, the parents in these communities don't have resources to provide their children with access to activities exposing them to external communities. Thus, the school environment, extracurricular, and enrichment services are the primary sources of such opportunities. The participants' counterparts in larger Southern city schools are taking Spanish, Japanese, French, Chinese, and German. At many elite schools in other parts of the country, middle and secondary school students are learning the aforementioned languages, as well as Arabic, Asante Twi, Xhosa, and Portuguese. The thirteenth and final competency is Physical and Emotional Health. Participants are members of communities which are overrepresented among those diagnosed with breast, colon and lung cancer; diabetes; asthma and HIV/AIDS. Like the rest of the country, these children also struggle with obesity and poor eating habits. Of the 48 children in KEMET Academy, close to 12% were obese, two were diagnosed with diabetes, and two had asthma. Also, managing emotional health has a great amount of stigma attached to it in rural, southern and African American communities. As a result, we position understanding of emotional and mental health in terms related to eating healthy and monitoring changes in diet, sleep patterns, and the importance of communicating feelings when engaging in these activities (ex. examining reasons behind comfort eating and restless nights). Despite the importance of organized athletics, regular exercise, walking, running, jumping rope, or playing outdoors to maintain normal weight, such activities held little importance to KEMET participants, particularly the girls. Addressing this competency with the others offers a holistic model for the enrichment of under-privileged youth.

The aforementioned enrichment counters the lack of resources available to the program's impoverished population. Incorporating these various competencies promises to offer participants the opportunity to grow academically and personally, potentially moving them beyond the cycle of poverty in which they currently find themselves. Use of the KEMET Competencies Associated with Success for Rural Youth (CASRY) model offers a comprehensive approach to addressing the needs of these at risk youth.

Conclusion

The focus of this model centers upon developing specific skill areas of children from underserved communities. Overall, coupled with opportunities for informal mentorship from individuals that have been successful in educational pursuits, we expect utilization of this model to increase post-secondary preparation and options for rural dwelling African American youth. The model addresses the wholeness of learning in a rural context and has the potential for far reaching influence. Due to preliminary evaluative outcomes of increased student awareness of educational opportunities, career or life options, self-capacity, and motivation, KEMET Academy promises to sustain recurring benefits to the most marginalized rural communities.

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Understanding Interactive CD-ROM Storybooks and their Functions in Reading Comprehension: A Critical Review

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Abstract

With dramatic changes and recent advances in multimedia, digital technologies through computers propose new ways for introducing kids to the literacy. Literacy educators have stated that traditional printed books are not sufficient and electronic books have the potential to change reading skills. As a valuable tool in educational settings new and varied forms of technology, specifically, interactive CD-ROM storybooks have been used in classroom literacy learning by students and teachers. Although, several studies indicate that interactive CD-ROM storybooks help children develop visual recognition and increase reading comprehension, the results of the experimental studies previously carried out in this area have been conflicting and often hard to interpret. Therefore, the main purposes of this review are to identify the potential benefits, functions and disadvantages of interactive storybooks and assess mixed results of previous studies related to interactive CD-ROM storybooks.

Keywords: Literacy and technology, interactive CD-ROM storybooks, reading comprehension.

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Introduction

Reading comprehension is influenced by new technology and literacy. Recent literature has stated a long tradition of book and print media is insufficient, students and teachers use new and varied forms of technology. The need for changes in the way we think about reading comprehension is inevitable (Coiro, 2003). Rand Reading Study Group (2002) pointed out “an explosion of alternative texts” and “interactive texts that incorporate hyperlinks and hypermedia introduce some complications in defining comprehension because they require skills and abilities beyond those required for the comprehension of conventional, linear print” (p. 14). These new reading environments bring out cognitive and aesthetic challenges to comprehension (Spires & Estes, 2002) and there is a need for theoretical description of the new reading environments (p.123).

Research findings are optimistic about the future of multimedia applications for readers. The National Reading Panel [NRP] meta-analysis has found the 21 studies used to assess computer technology that showed promising results (National Institute of Child Health and Human Development [NICHD], 2000). Many features of interactive CD-ROM storybooks are well matched for phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency; vocabulary, and comprehension (Pearman & Lefever-Davis, 2006). Computer software has the exceptional capacity to bring individualized practice to students who need to enhance their reading fluency (Oakley, 2003). The ability to recognize sound-symbol relationships is essential, but it is not enough for comprehension. Students must also activate their prior knowledge and use context hints to comprehend what they read. There is growing indication that computer-supported effects such as animation and sound allow students to make these connections (Matthew, 1997). Greenlee-Moore and Smith (1996) indicate that the use of interactive CD-ROM storybooks may help improve reading comprehension for elementary students. In addition, CD-ROM storybooks develop the story setting through animated graphics and sound effects indicating story mood and events and thus supporting comprehension (Lefever-Davis & Pearman, 2005). Visual aids in interactive CD-ROM storybooks are helpful for understanding text and building coherent mental representation.

Interactive CD-ROM Storybooks

As valuable tool in educational setting, interactive books have been used in classroom literacy learning in the early school years (Chen, Ferdig, & Wood, 2003; Matthews, 1996; Underwood, 2000). Interactive CD-ROM storybooks are reading software for children in illustrated storybooks that help children develop visual recognition. Interactive storybooks are mainly designed to integrate text, graphics, animations, music and other multimedia components in order to bring support to the story line (Chen et al., 2003). Children could read the stories on their own or listen to the stories read and activate dialogue or animated part of illustration. According to Doty (1999), interactive CD-ROM storybooks refer to software which presents readers with several options for interaction. The text is usually highlighted as it is read allowing students to follow the words as they are read. Text is statically displayed on a computer screen or interactive computer text, on CD-ROM, that allow readers to activate graphic animations. In addition, some CDs also contain games and other interactive features based on the story

(Unsworth, 2003). Interactive CD-ROM storybooks may also be known as electronic texts, talking books, or electronic books (Pearman, 2003).

Benefits of Interactive CD-ROM Storybooks

Probably the most significant benefit of interactive CD-ROM storybooks provides reader control. The readers can make choice for themselves when and where they need help. The pronunciation, definition, hearing of the words provides minimum interruption in reader's comprehension (Lefever-Davis & Pearman, 2005). Also these features help students to not spend too much mental energy to decode words nor do they have to struggle with new vocabulary. Therefore, students have more time and energy to process meaning for comprehension (Lefever-Davis & Pearman, 2005; Pearman, 2008).

Another benefit of reading and interacting with interactive storybook has likely to be an influential motivating force for even the most unwilling readers (Matthew, 1996). Multisensory features of interactive storybooks such as the sounds effects accompanying the narration, the animations, the colorful pictures and the variety of text styles provide powerful advantages like facilitating the process of constructing meaning, expanding schemata and assisting reader's difficulties (Matthew, 1996; McNabb, 1998; Pearman, 2008; Reinking, McKenna, Labbo, & Kieffer, 1998). Studies also reveal that interactive CD-ROM storybooks give immediate help to students, eliminating the need for teachers to provide students with instant attention (Chen et al., 2003; Doty, Popplewell, & Byers, 2001; Pearman, 2008). Several studies indicate that CD-ROM storybooks increase reading comprehension (Doty, 1999; Doty et al., 2001; Matthew, 1997; Pearman, 2003, 2008).

Pearman (2008) expresses that traditional print texts are passive, static, and cannot respond to individual readers, are restricted by their linear composition, and rely heavily on the reader's internal strategies to activate prior knowledge. However, interactive CD-ROM storybooks can provide a literal interaction between the reader and the text (Reinking, 1992). Chen et al. (2003) also investigated and characterized features of interactive storybooks. They explained several benefits of interactive storybooks: (1) They are excellent tools for the integration of technological media and instructional design. (2) Interactive storybooks assist teachers to rebuild their teaching and ideas of how to use stories in their classroom. (3) Interactive storybooks provide exceptional methods of instruction and they also expand the variety of them.

Disadvantages of Interactive CD-ROM Storybooks

On the other hand, some studies disagree with the view that characteristics of interactive CD-ROM storybooks are useful for children's literacy development (DeJean, Miller, & Olson, 1997; De Jong & Bus, 2002; Labbo & Kuhn, 2000; Matthew, 1996; Nibley, 1993; Okolo & Hayes, 1996; Scoresby, 1996; Trushell & Maitland, 2005; Underwood & Underwood, 1998). Many interactive reading environments bring in a new set of cognitive barriers that can cause experienced readers of traditional print text to be cognitively overloaded (Delaney & Landow, 1991). De Jong and Bus (2002) revealed that children's understanding of a story's content was less supported by the electronic version than the traditional print book format. Interactive

features of electronic storybooks can offer too many choices and too many animations that may distract and confuse struggling readers (Coiro, 2003). Furthermore, if the illustrations, games, attractive pictorial options included in the interactive storybooks do not support the story, they can distract and draw attention away the children's focus on the story rather than support the narrative's comprehension, could cause passive reading, and delay children's early literacy development (De Jong & Bus, 2002; Labbo & Kuhn, 2000; Matthew, 1996; Shamir & Korat, 2006; Underwood & Underwood, 1998).

The interactive text features that improve context and activate background knowledge may be disadvantageous to students (Pearman, 2008). Over time, dependence on interactive text features may delay literacy development of younger readers because the use of reading strategies does not become an integral part of the reading process (McKenna, 1998). Also, the computer does not offer help or provide instruction in reading strategies as long as the reader does not ask for help (Pearman, 2008). Many of the software programs contain some features such as animations, reading aloud words, sentences, pages, or the whole book. Lewin (1996) and Pearman (2008) expressed concern that with these features readers could rely on the computer to decode words or to read the story instead of developing their own abilities. Moreover, the CD-ROM books, dissimilarly, using hyperlinks to the Internet's resources, exist in a closed environment, which engages the learner in the simulated situation completely on the CD. The CD-ROM is more object-oriented and focused on knowledge delivery or guidance in some specified topic (Chen et al., 2003).

CD-ROM Storybooks and Reading Comprehension

Pearman and Lefever-Davis (2006) reported that as one of five critical components of reading instruction, comprehension can be supported by CD-ROM storybooks. They claim comprehension skills mainly appropriated to being developed through an interactive CD-ROM storybooks format include construction background knowledge, story schema and metacognition. For example, sound effects and animation functions of CD-ROM storybooks rapidly and effectively place the reader directly in the setting thus contributing to reading comprehension. Additionally, metacognition can be supported through CD-ROM storybooks because CD-ROM storybooks provide opportunities to prompt the computer to assist their reading such as pronouncing or defining vocabulary, and contributing reader control (Pearman & Lefever-Davis, 2006).

As seen in Table 1, there are three groups of studies. The first group has supported and favored Pearman and Lefever-Davis' claim that comprehension can be supported and developed by CD-ROM storybooks (Greenlee-More & Smith, 1996; Grimshaw, Dungworth, McKnight, & Morris, 2006; Matthew, 1997; Miller, Blackstock, & Miller, 1994; Pearman, 2003, 2008; Shamir, Korat & Barbi, 2008). The second group found detrimental effects on comprehension (Labbo & Kuhn, 2000; Okolo & Hayes, 1996; Scoresby, 1996; Trushell, Burrell, & Maitland, 2001; Trushell & Maitland, 2005; Trushell, Maitland, & Burrell, 2003; Underwood, 2000). The third group of studies found mixed results with increase in comprehension depending on the assessment tool or no evidence that storybooks support or distract comprehension (De Jong & Bus, 2004; Doty, 1999; Doty et al., 2001; Kim, Yoon, Whang, Tversky, & Morrison, 2007; Lefever-Davis & Pearman, 2005; Matthew, 1996).

A study conducted by Greenlee-Moore & Smith (1996) to explore the effects of interactive CD-ROM software on children's reading comprehension when reading shorter and easier narrative text against longer and more difficult narrative texts on printed pages as compared to reading the same narrative texts using interactive CD-ROM software presented by the computer. Thirty-one fourth-grade children were involved in her study. Comprehension was measured by six multiple-choice comprehension questions, two literal, one vocabulary, and three inferential questions. The results of study revealed significantly higher comprehension scores when students were reading the longer and more difficult narratives from the interactive software. There was no difference when two treatment groups were reading the shorter and easier narratives. The interactive CD-ROM software caused higher scores on comprehension questions related to the story on more difficult and longer narratives.

There has been other research on how interactive computer software and CD-ROM books influence children's reading achievement. Kathryn Matthew conducted a study comparing the reading comprehension of third-grade students who read CD-ROM storybooks with those who read traditional printed books. The students' story retelling scores on the two CD-ROM storybooks were compared to traditional print storybooks. Thirty third-grade students were participated in the Matthew's study (1997). Matthew (1997) explains that the comprehension of students may be more accurately reflected in retellings than in the answers to comprehension questions. A statistically significant difference was found between students' story retellings of print stories and their retellings of CD-ROM storybooks. Students scored significantly higher on retellings when reading the CD-ROM stories. Matthew (1997) also declared that additional research is necessary to corroborate these findings.

McNabb (1998) did a qualitative study of four subjects ranging in age from 7-12 years old. These subjects were under one or two grade levels their expected grade reading level. The purpose of this study was to understand comprehension strategies used by struggling readers when reading interactive CD-ROM storybooks differed from those strategies used when reading paper storybooks. Struggling readers were allowed to use animations to help them in words analysis, recognition and fluency. The results of the study showed that multisensory and interactive features and the context expansion features of CD-ROM storybooks assisted struggling readers to read without difficulty and comprehend better than static paper books. Another result was that struggling readers were able to apply reading strategies individually when support from teacher, tutor, or parent was not available during reading interactive CD-ROM books.

Pearman conducted two studies (2003, 2008) on second grades students with oral retellings. The purpose of first study was to investigate whether second grade students with varying degrees of reading proficiency scored higher on an oral retelling assessment of comprehension when text was presented in an interactive, electronic format than when text was presented in a traditional print format (Pearman, 2003). Participants were 54 second-grade students from a rural elementary school in the Mid-South. A repeated measures design was used with each student reading both an interactive and a traditional print text at their developmental level of Low, Medium, or High as designated by teacher. The results of the study indicate that interactive, electronic text may facilitate reading comprehension for students that are reading below grade level or are struggling with developing reading skills and strategies. In the second

study by Pearman (2008) 69 second-grade students were participated. Interactive, CD-ROM storybooks and the traditional print texts were used in this study. Evidence from the study indicates that interactive, CD-ROM storybooks group scored significantly higher in comprehension than traditional paper group. Therefore, the use of CD-ROM storybooks could be beneficial for young readers.

Shamir et al. (2008) explored the effects of interactive storybooks for kindergarteners' emergent literacy skills within the context of paired peer versus individual use of the interactive books. The sample of 110 kindergarteners had a mean age of 5.64 years in a low social economic status. No one had been diagnosed with learning disabilities. Participants were randomly assigned to four groups: 30 tutors, 30 tutees, and 30 individual learners, all of whom used the interactive book and 20 children in a control group who were only exposed to their regular kindergarten program. Pre- and post-intervention emergent literacy measures included story comprehension, phonological awareness, and word recognition. The overall improvement of the children in the three experimental groups was higher than that of the children in the control group. In addition, interactive book activity increased story comprehension, phonological awareness, and emergent reading, over those who worked with it individually (Shamir et al., 2008).

Grimshaw et al. (2006) investigated the differences in children's comprehension and enjoyment of storybooks according to the medium of presentation. Participants in Grimshaw's study included 132 children aged 9-11. The type of medium did not significantly affect the children's enjoyment of storybook, but it took the children longer to read the interactive versions. For the interactive versions of storybooks, comprehension scores were higher for retrieval-type questions than for inference ones. The use of the online dictionary in the interactive condition was significantly greater than that for the printed dictionary. The provision of narration in the interactive version led to significantly higher comprehension scores than when narration was absent.

However, several studies reported that the same interactive nature of the interactive storybooks can sometimes serve as a distraction from the storyline (De Jong & Bus 2002; Labbo & Kuhn, 2000; Trushell & Maitland, 2005; Okolo & Hayes 1996; Scoresby, 1996; Trushell, Burrell, & Maitland, 2001; Trushell, Maitland, & Burrell, 2003; Underwood, 2000). For example, Okolo and Hayes (1996) evaluated the use of children's literature presented via one of three conditions: an adult reading a book to the child; the child reading a CD-ROM version of a book on the computer but without animation; and the child reading the book on computer with high level animation. The study, in one primary grade classroom, involved 10 students with learning disabilities and 10 students without disabilities. Students preferred the high animation condition, spending almost four times as much time reading the book but Okolo and Hayes (1996) found that the high animation misled students into drawing wrong conclusion about the text.

Labbo and Kuhn (2000) distinguished between considerate and inconsiderate CD-ROM talking books. Considerate CD-ROM talking books contain multimedia effects that are congruent with and integral to the story. Inconsiderate CD-ROM talking books contain multimedia effects that are incongruent with or incidental to the story. They found that while considerate CD-ROM

talking books supported the children's understanding and retelling of the story and involved in meaning making process, inconsiderate talking books fostered children's passive viewing and did not support their story understanding.

Scoresby (1996) assessed the effects of animation and reading ability on recall of illustrated and non-illustrated text information. Eighty-four second graders were included in the study and twenty four open-ended questions were used to test student' recall of story details. The results of the study indicate that readers who viewed animations being able to recall fewer story details once the story was complete.

Underwood (2000) compared both interactive (talking book software) and paper format designed to provide supplementary reading practice. A mixed empirical methodology combining both quantitative and qualitative techniques was employed. Learning gains were measured by story writing, observations and interviews. Sixty-two 8-year old children took part in study. Underwood (2000) reported that pupils' recall of the story of an interactive talking book was poor. In addition, children found the talking books highly motivating.

De Jong and Bus (2002) observed 4–5-year-old children exploring interactive books that included games and other activities. They found that the children's understanding of the content of the story was less well supported by the interactive version compared to the regular book format. They concluded that “the many attractive options of interactive books seem to distract children's attention from text, and number of readings of the text in favor of iconic and pictorial explorations” (p. 154).

Trushell, Burrell, and Maitland (2001) study examined Year 5 primary pupils' behaviors when reading and their recall of an interactive storybook. Pupils from three Year 5 classes participated in the study. Data were collected by observations and multiple-choice questions. This study found that pupils' recall of the storyline of an interactive storybook was poor and interactive storybook may provide mere entertainment.

Trushell, Maitland, and Burrell (2003) administered a study on year 4 primary school pupils (8-9 years-old). Data collected by multiple-choice questions, verbal recollections and opinions, and observations. They found that graphic animations and sound effects provide contextual support for readers. However, those do not support the storyline or story events and detriment to readers' ability to recall story events.

Another study, Trushell and Maitland (2005) included Year 5 and Year 4 pupils participating and two interactive storybooks on CD-ROM were used in this study. Pupils' recall of the interactive storybooks was gauged by two measures, collaborative verbal story retelling and short multiple choice quizzes. The outcomes of the study indicate that access to cued animations and sound effects did have adverse effects on pupils' story recall. The story grammar recall of Year 5 and Year 4 pupils who had read an interactive storybook was found to have deteriorated throughout the event structure.

The following studies had mixed results with increase comprehension depending on the assessment instrument. Doty et al. (2001) investigated interactive CD-ROM storybooks and

young readers' reading comprehension. First grade children students read a conventional print storybook or an interactive CD-ROM version offering word pronunciations, definitions, and labels for illustrations; narration was turned off. Children reading the CD-ROM version of CD-ROM storybooks significantly scored higher than conventional print group on comprehension questions but oral retelling scores were not different.

Matthew (1996) investigated the impact of interactive CD-ROM storybooks on the reading comprehension and attitudes toward reading of 37 matched pairs of third grade students. The students were assessed through story retellings and 10 open-ended comprehension questions. The results pointed out that when comprehension was assessed through open-ended questions, there was no statistically significant difference in reading comprehension. When comprehension was assessed by story retelling, students who read the interactive CD-ROM storybooks obtained significantly higher scores than students who read the print version of the storybooks. There was no significant difference between the reading attitudes of the students in the groups.

Another study of interactive CD-ROM storybooks and reading comprehension was presented by Doty (1999). The purpose of her study was to “determine if there was a difference in the level of young readers’ reading comprehension when one group of students read an interactive CD-ROM storybook and one group of students read the same story from a conventionally printed book” (Doty, 1999, p.1). The participants were 39 second-grade children. The study used oral retellings and comprehension questions for data collection. Study findings differed from Mathew’s studies (1996, 1997). Doty’s study found that there was no significant difference in mean scores on the retellings between the scores but there was a significant difference in mean scores on the comprehension questions between the two groups (Doty, 1999). Doty (1999) concluded that “evidence from this study, as well as others indicates that reading comprehension can be enhanced through the use of interactive CD-ROM storybooks” (p.6).

De Jong and Bus (2004) studied the efficacy of interactive books in fostering kindergarten children's emergent story understanding. The study compared effects of children's independent reading of stories interactively with effects of printed books read aloud by adults. Participants were 18 four- to five-year-old Dutch kindergarten children in the initial stages of developing story comprehension. Electronic reading produced experiences and effects similar to adult-read printed books. Children frequently interacted with the animations often embedded in interactive stories, but there was no evidence that the animations distracted children from listening to the text presented by interactive books, nor that the animations interfered with story understanding. Findings suggested that children at this stage of development profited from interactive books.

Lefever-Davis & Pearman (2005) conducted a study on 11 first-grade students. Five girls and six boys representing a wide range of reading levels took part in the study. Each child read two CD-ROM talking books. During each reading, a running record was administered to assess student reading accuracy rate. Results from this study indicate CD-ROM storybooks have the potential to support readers and promote reading skill. In contrast, this study also found that features of CD-ROM storybooks may prove to be distractions for students. The length of time it takes for pages to turn disrupts the reading process, delays the opportunity for students to begin

reading, and increases their frustration level. This frustration seemed particularly evident for the more proficient readers.

Conclusion

Recent advances in multimedia offer new possibilities for introducing children to the world of reading through computer (Bus, De Jong, & Verhallen, 2006). Digital environment supporters in education believe that CD-ROM storybooks have the potential to change reading comprehension. Unfortunately, these claims have yet to be supported by the very limited research. The results of the studies previously carried out in this area have been conflicting and often hard to interpret. Additionally, mixed results have been found for variables reader's prior knowledge, experience with interactive storybooks, and separate functions of interactive storybooks such as animation (Dalton & Strangman, 2006).

Basically, there are three groups of studies related to interactive storybooks and reading comprehension. The first group early works claimed comprehension skills can be supported and developed through interactive CD-ROM storybooks. The second group research on interactive CD-ROM storybooks found detrimental effects on comprehension. The third group of studies found mixed results with increase in comprehension depending on the assessment instrument or found no evidence that storybooks support or distract comprehension. A review of the literature has shown that there are very few experimental studies that investigate the effects of interactive CD-ROM storybooks on readers' comprehension. Therefore, more work is needed to better understand about the effects of interactive storybooks on readers' comprehension.

Table 1. Summaries of the studies related to interactive storybooks

Author & Year	Participants	Materials	Assessment	Results
Miller, Blackstock, & Miller (1994)	Third-graders	CD-ROM storybooks Discis Books	Miscue analysis	Interactive CD-ROM storybooks increased decoding ability and fluency and decreased meaning related errors
Greenlee-More & Smith (1996)	Fourth-graders	Interactive CD-ROM software	Multiple-choice questions	CD-ROM storybooks increased comprehension when reading longer and difficult narratives. No differences the shorter and easier narratives
Matthew (1996)	Third-graders	CD-ROM stories	Open-ended questions	There were no significant differences in reading comprehension
Okolo & Hayes (1996)	Second-graders with learning disabilities and without disabilities	CD-ROM version of a book Living books Discis books	Retellings and comprehension questions	There were no statistical differences between students
Scoresby (1996)	Third-graders	Interactive storybooks	Open-ended questions	Animations within interactive storybooks were detrimental on story recall
Matthew (1997)	Third-graders	CD-ROM format stories	Story retellings	Students scored significantly higher on retellings when reading the CD-ROM stories

Table 1. Continued

Author & Year	Participants	Materials	Assessment	Results
McNabb (1998)	Struggling readers 7-12-year old	CD-ROM storybooks	Qualitative	Multisensory features of CD-ROM storybooks made them easier for struggling readers to read and comprehend than paper books
Doty (1999)	Second-graders	Interactive CD-ROM storybooks	Oral retellings and comprehension questions	Students who read the CD-ROM storybook scored higher on comprehension questions. No significant difference in the retelling scores
Underwood (2000)	8-year old children	Talking book software	Story writing, observations and interviews	Children's recall of the story of an interactive talking book was poor
Trushell, Burrell, & Maitland (2001)	Year 5 primary school pupils	Interactive CD-ROM storybooks	Multiple-choice questions and observations	Pupils' recall of the storyline of an interactive storybook was found to be poor
Doty, Popplewell, & Byers (2001)	Second-graders	Interactive CD-ROM storybooks	Retellings and comprehension questions	Children who read the CD-ROM scored higher on test, but no difference in mean scores on the retellings
Pearman (2003)	Second-graders	Interactive texts	Oral retellings	Interactive texts facilitate comprehension for kids that are reading below grade level

Table 1. Continued

Author & Year	Participants	Materials	Assessment	Results
Trushell, Maitland, & Burrell (2003)	Year 4 primary school pupils (8-9 year-old)	Interactive storybooks on CD-ROM	Multiple-choice questions, verbal recollections and opinions, and observations	Animations and sound effects could provide contextual support for readers but they negatively affect readers' ability to recall story events
De Jong & Bus (2004)	Kindergarteners (4-5 year-old)	Interactive books	Orally presented short comments and questions	There was no evidence that the animations distracted children, or that the animations interfered with story understanding
Lefever-Davis & Pearman (2005)	First-graders (6-7 year-old)	Interactive CD-ROM talking books	Running record	The digital pronunciations were a predominant feature of the CD-ROM storybooks were interpreted as a support and a distraction for developing beginning readers' skills
Trushell & Maitland (2005)	Year 5 and Year 4 primary school pupils	Interactive storybooks on CD-ROM	Verbal story retelling and short multiple choice quizzes	Access to cued animations and sound effect did have unhelpful effects on pupils' story recall. Storybook was found to have deteriorated throughout the event structure

Table 1. Continued

Author & Year	Participants	Materials	Assessment	Results
Grimshaw, Dungworth, McKnight, & Morris (2006)	9-11 years children	Interactive version of storybooks with an online dictionary.	The comprehension tests (Standard Attainment Tests)	The type of medium did not significantly affect the children's enjoyment. Comprehension scores were higher for retrieval-type questions. The narration in the interactive version led to significantly higher comprehension scores than when narration was absent
Kim, Yoon, Whang, Tversky, & Morrison (2007)	Fourth and sixth graders	Animated computer presentation	True-false comprehension test questions and attitude questionnaire	Animated computer presentation increased enjoyment and motivation, but not comprehension test score
Shamir, Korat & Barbi (2008)	Kindergarteners (5-6 year-old)	Interactive CD-ROM storybooks	Pre- and post-intervention. Comprehension test, six questions about the interactive book	Interactive book CD-ROM provided an advantage in comprehension, phonological awareness, and emergent reading
Pearman (2008)	Second-graders	Interactive CD-ROM storybooks Discis Books	Oral retellings	Interactive, CD-ROM storybooks are beneficial for young readers' comprehension

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Development of Social Studies Curriculum in Turkey and John Dewey's Effect on the Modernization of Turkish Education

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Abstract

The purpose of this study is to examine and analyze the historical development, status and purpose of the Turkish social studies curriculum in addition to understanding John Dewey's impact on the modernization of Turkish educational system. Document analysis as a qualitative research method is used in this study. The data were obtained from the historical documents about the development of the Turkish social studies curriculum, the Internet sources, printed literature—such as reports about the curriculum development process done by national governmental organizations like Ministry of Education and Board of Education, and review and research articles about social studies educations and Dewey's effect on the Turkish Educational system. This study consists of two main parts: one is *The History of Social Studies Curriculum Development in Turkey*, which addresses the historical development of Social Studies Curriculum in two major eras: The Era of Ottomans and the Republican Period. The second part of the study examines the impact of a famous 20th century American philosopher and educator, *John Dewey*, on Turkey.

Keywords: Social Studies Education, Curriculum Development, Turkish Educational System, John Dewey

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Introduction

The purposes of the study are to examine and analyze the historical development, status and purpose of the Turkish social studies curriculum, and to understand John Dewey's impact on the modernization of Turkish educational system. Document analysis as a qualitative research method is used in this study. The data were obtained from the historical documents about the development of the social studies curriculum in Turkey, the Internet sources and printed literature (such as reports about the curriculum development process done by national governmental organizations like Ministry of Education and Board of Education), and review and research articles about social studies educations and Dewey's effect on the Turkish Educational system.

This study consists of two main parts: one is *The History of Social Studies Curriculum Development in Turkey* addressing the historical development of Social Studies Curriculum in two major eras: The Era of Ottomans and the Republican Period. The second part of the study examines the impacts of a famous 20th century American philosopher and educator, *John Dewey*, on Turkey. Therefore, the following questions were addressed in the second part of this study: Why did Atatürk invite John Dewey to observe and analyze the Turkish educational system other than someone else? What was his importance? What is his educational philosophy? What was his role and contributions on the modernization of Turkish Education system?

In order to have a clear understanding, it is obviously necessary to look at the questions from a historical perspective. Thus, in the first part, the issues are examined in two main eras: The Era of Ottomans and the Republican Era. In the second part, I deal with understanding of John Dewey's effect on the modernization of the Turkish curriculum. Of course, to understand that point we should be aware of his beliefs on educational systems. Therefore, in this part, I address Dewey's philosophy in the light of some of his writings related to social studies education such as *The School and Society (1900)*, *Democracy and Education (1916)*, *Freedom and Culture (1989)*, *Education from a Social Perspective (1913)*, and *Human Nature and Conduct (2002)*.

Method/Research Design

Qualitative research is the research technique used to gain insight into human behavior (Glesne, 1999; Patton, 2002; Holliday, 2007) and seeks to understand how and why certain events or actions or feelings occur. Through qualitative research strategies, researchers can obtain rich and robust data for their topic. These strategies, observation, interview, and document analysis, can stand independently or work in triangulation with others (Glesne, 1999). The primary focus of this study was of a historical nature; therefore, the primary research tool used was document analysis.

Glesne (1999) defines qualitative research as the deliberate collection of data, via a number of ways - interviews, data analysis, observations, and surveys - in order to acquire trustworthy and useful results while Myers (1997) points out that this type of research involves the use of qualitative data, such as interviews, documents, and participant observation, to understand and explain social phenomena.

Through the method of document analysis, researchers get access to written materials which will offer them the essential information to deepen the topic. These materials can either be primary (first hand) or secondary sources, depending on what are accessible and needed. Document analysis is oftentimes the first line of research for those looking to use other types of qualitative research, particularly observation, surveys, and interviews (Glesne, 1999). The advantages of document analysis are ease of access, cost, and reliability. By considering all of these advantages, this study used document analysis as a qualitative research method and data collection techniques to gain a thorough understanding of the issues addressed by the research questions. The researcher gained a deeper understanding of the social studies program and its historical developmental characteristics that impact student learning. The study included a review of information sources including the printed literature—such as reports about the curriculum development process done by national governmental organizations like Ministry of Education and Board of Education, social studies curriculum related records, published reports, and other salient data sources to provide details of the historical, economic, and social contexts for the development of the program and an extensive review of secondary resources, related research articles, online documents and websites about social studies curriculum and two reports about Turkish Education System written by John Dewey and his impact on the modernization of Turkish education system. This study consists of two main parts: one is *The History of Social Studies Curriculum Development in Turkey*, which addresses the historical development of Social Studies Curriculum in two major eras: The Era of Ottomans and the Republican Period. The second part of the study examines the impact of a famous 20th century American philosopher and educator, *John Dewey*, on Turkey.

Research Questions

- What are the characteristics of Turkish social studies program and its historical development and progress?
- Why did Atatürk invite John Dewey to examine and analyze the Turkish educational system other than someone else?
- What was his importance?
- What is his educational philosophy?
- What was his role in and contribution to modernization of the Turkish Education system?

The History of Social Studies Curriculum Development in Turkey

The Era of Ottomans

There was not a subject in schools specifically named “Social Studies Education” in the era of Ottomans. However, there were some subjects in the educational system that involved the common topics of Social Studies curriculum as it will be explained later in the study. Therefore, to be able to understand the place of Social Studies, we need to look at the educational system and schooling in general. “Since the Ottoman Empire was an Islamic state in nature, the philosophy of its educational system was based on the Islamic principles and Turkish tradition. It was influenced by Islamic scholars and institutions” (Kocer, 1987 as cited in Turan, 1997, p. 7).

The Ottomans established schools that were nearby the mosques, and organized a graded system of education, from the lowest *mektep* (primary school) to the highest *madrasa* (university). In addition to these religious schools, there were several other agencies that performed important educational functions. For example, the famous Palace School (Enderun Mektebi) engaged the choicest youth from among non-Muslim subjects of the Empire; it trained them in what may be called a combination of the liberal, vocational, and physical elements of education and prepared them for high positions in the Royal Court, in the army, and the civil bureaucracy (Kazamias & Massialas, 1965 as cited in Turan, 1997).

The Palace School and Madrasa were the two foremost institutions which contributed toward the greatness and the solidity of the Ottoman nation. The curricula and recruitment policies for these institutions were carefully developed and implemented (Kazamias 1966 as cited in Turan, 1997).

The inheritance of the Ottomans was partly based on its formal and informal educational institutions which were basically and partially based on religious principles (Turan 1997). The language of instruction in all levels and schools was Arabic which in the long run lead to a dichotomy of the literate (Ulema, versed in Arabic) versus the illiterate (juchela, speaking Turkish) and the inevitable low status of Turks and their spoken languages. Programs of teaching or curricula seem to have been grouped under three faculties or specialties: (1) Religion and Law, (2) The Natural Sciences, (3) Instrumental (or auxiliary for other) sciences.

Religion or Law (the advanced knowledge of Islam) included:

Tafsir (the meaning and interpretations of the texts in Qur'an),

Hadith (the Prophet's sayings and checking the authenticity thereof),

Fiqh (the systematic, historical study of Islamic law),

Kelam (Islamic philosophy defending faith in Tevhid/unity),

The Natural Sciences (rational sciences, philosophy, mathematics and astronomy),

The instrumental sciences (logic, rhetoric, eloquence, précis writing and esthetics).

Priest-preachers (Imam-Hatibs), state functionaries, and Kadıs (judge-governors) of cities and towns were, as a rule, all Madrasa graduates. Teachers of elementary (Sibyan) schools, teaching mainly reading and some writing, were graduates of special programs, comprising of Arabic, Arabic grammar, literature, rhetoric, ethics of discussion, didactics of the teaching-learning process, mathematics and geography. Arithmetic was included in geometry while history was part of, or taken up with, geography. Special requirements of the teacher training programs, namely ethics (rules) of discussions and didactics call for comment. These two seem to be unique and of Turkish innovation. Candidates in the teacher program were exempted from *fikh* (Islamic Law); Teachers were the accepted and respected members of community. Prophet Muhammad had declared that "Teachers are like candles of this world and the hereafter." More popularly, education was considered as a road to manhood.

One can wonders the relation between Social Studies and the things mentioned above. To make the connection between them, attention should be given to the primary aim of the Islamic education. In its view of the primary aim of education,

Islamic education is different from every other educational system in the world. Most of such systems are similar in that they aim at “the preparation of a good citizen,” in a given country. But since each country has its own specific concept of a “good citizen,” the education imparted on this base tends to be nationalistic and, therefore, narrow in scope. On the other hand, Islam takes a much broader view of the function of the education and concentrates mainly on “the development of a good human being” (Jaradat, 1978).

During the decline of the Ottoman State some efforts were made to change and “Westernize” the Ottoman State and its educational institutions. Since the beginning of the 17th century, the concept of reform, modernization, change, and westernization of the educational system have become part of the Turkish social, political, and educational life (Akyuz, 1994; Tarman, 2010 & 2008; Turan, 1997). The situation demanded that changes be effected in the traditional curriculum. Along with a theoretical understanding, practical operations had an important function in the military schools.

The Ottoman officials selected its first student for further study in Western Europe among the graduates of the military schools. From their ranks came the leading teachers for civilian as well as military schools throughout the years. The establishment of these military schools particularly during the 19th century, not only added a new group of institutions to the Empire’s educational system, but also provided a stimulating influence on educational thinking in general. They were a source of new ideas in curriculum and method. They directly influenced many of the civilian schools. “During the famous *Tanzimat* era (1839-1876), a Ministry of Education was established (1857). It promoted an extensive reorganization of the Ottoman state school system, including the elementary school (*rüşdiye*), lower and secondary school (*idadiye* and *sultaniye*), and the university. Some pioneering work in girls’ education was initiated, while some progress was even made during the more conservative reign of Abdülhamid II (1876-1909). The first modern university in the Muslim world was founded with the *Darülfünun* (1900) in Istanbul. During the last decade of the Ottoman Empire (1908-1918), in the second constitutional period (*Meşrutiyet*)—a pedagogical method with emphasis upon *terbiye*, (i.e., didacticism and education, rather than *maarif* (knowledge), was fostered” (Gazo, 1996, p. 3).

The Republican Era

The declaration of the Republic has brought a big change to the fundamental structure of the state, to its aims and functions. The educational system has become the central command for this change (Tarman, 2008 & 2010). Since then, the Ministry of National Education System is responsible for the performance, supervision and auditing of all educational services, on behalf of the Government in conformity with the provisions of the Basic Law of National Education.

From the beginning of the republican era to present, the curriculum has been regulated several times in the following years: 1924; 1926, 1930, 1932, 1936, 1948, 1962, 1968, 1989, 1993, 1999 and 2005.

For the elementary schools, the main purpose was to prepare the young people for their local and national needs as “good citizens” in 1926 curriculum (MEB, 1926).

The 1926 curriculum was a kind of reform in terms of principle, method, course and subject both as a form (structure) and content (Gülcan and et al., 2003). In this curriculum there are some concepts such as social studies, inclusive (integrated) education, school for work. These concepts are emphasized in John Dewey's first report about the modernization of Turkish Education system written in 1924 (Dewey, 1939; Kazamias, 1966). The objectives of the 1926 curriculum was stated that elementary school would educate young generation such a citizen that they would actively contribute to the society where they live. Characteristics of a good citizen and how well a good citizen would actively contribute to his society weren't expressed well in this sentence which tells the objectives of the curriculum. Especially in the first period, "integrated instruction" principle was accepted in all courses pivoting on life (existence) and society. In the 1926 curriculum, objectives of each course and main features of a method to be applied in education were implied (MEB, 1926). During that time *History*, *Geography* and *Civic* were taught in the 4th and 5th grades as core subjects, and two hours a week was devoted for each one. Here are the titles of some subjects in the 1926 social studies curriculum; our behaviors in the classroom, at school and outside the school, our house, followed direction between our house and school, encountered objects/items on the followed route, our body and cleanliness, farming and time spent on the farm, seasons, orchard, garden, visiting carpenters and forger's shops, our winter clothes, winter pastime, state organization, post, telegraph, sanitation, main diseases, agricultural experience in the school garden, forests. (Journal of Ministry of Culture, 1937)

On the 1932, 1936 and 1936 curricula, some other principles added for the purpose of the education such as providing the best mental and physical habits to the students, and teaching how to be well adopted for Turkish nation and the republic (MEB, 1930 & 1932).

In those years, the courses were offered under the same names as in 1926 but with, one hour reduction for *Civic* in the 5th grades. In 1962, instead of *History*, *Geography and Civics*, the names of the courses were changed as "Society and Country Studies" with the allocation of 6 hours a week for the 4th grade, and 5 hours a week for the 5th grade (MEB, 1962). The name, "Society and Country Studies", was changed to "Social Studies" in 1968 with the allocation of 5 hours a week for both the 4th and 5th grades (MEB, 1968).

As for the middle schools, *History* and *Geography* was offered under their own names. *History* was offered two hours a week in the 6th & 7th grades and three hours in the 8th grade until 1938. Between 1938 and 1949, it was two hours a week for each class. *Geography*, on the other hand, was offered 2 hours a week in the 6th grade while one hour in the 7th & 8th grades in 1924. In the 1927, 1930, 1931 and 1949 curricula, it was 2 hours a week for the 6th & 7th grades while one hour for the 8th grade. In 1968, instead of *History*, *Geography and Civics*, the names of the courses were changed as "Social Studies" with the allocation of 5 hours a week for the 6th & 7th grades and 4 hours a week for the 8th grade (MEB, 1968).

In the 1968 social studies curriculum was practiced nearly 30 years and the main purpose of the program was to create citizens believing that Turkish Republic is a national, democratic and social country based on human rights, and that Turkish Republic has an indivisible integrity with its land and people, and is a creative

member of the world community (MEB, 1968). The name of the subject called “Studies on Society and Country” was changed into “Social Studies”. The most important improvement with this curriculum was that the concept of integration provided for social studies course in the previous curriculum. With this curriculum, social studies and science studies courses besides life studies course were accepted as a main course. In this curriculum, all of the objectives were student-centered (Akbaba, 2004; Öztürk, 2006).

The following topics have been taught in the *6 grade History class*: Definition and importance of history and its place among other sciences; The importance of Central Asia in the formation of civilizations and the roles Turks played; The civilizations established in Central Asia spreading around as Chinese, Indian, Egyptian and Anatolian civilizations; The formation of the Mediterranean Civilizations; The relationship between the Aegean and Roman civilizations and the Eastern civilizations; The political and cultural development of Turks in Central Asia; History of Islam and its influence on the civilization of the world; Contributions that Turks made to Islam upon becoming Muslims; and Europe, the church and the feudal system during the Medieval ages.

The 7th Grades History Class: Turkish History starting with Turks coming to Anatolia in the 11th century (there was a left out section: The Ottoman Empire - its development, culture and civilization); Western Asia and Europe during the same period; History of Europe given within the framework of geographical discoveries, Renaissance and reforms. These are correlated with the Ottoman Empire in the 17th and 18th centuries; and the Reformation in the Ottoman Empire.

The 8th Grade History Class: Political, institutional and cultural development of the Ottoman Empire at the beginning of the 20th Century; Tripoli and Balkan Wars, Europeans aiming at the Ottoman Empire; Evaluation of the World War I from the perspectives of Europe-World and the Ottoman Empire; The evaluation of the effects of the World War I on the Ottoman Empire and the relationship with The War of Independence; The War of Independence and Ataturk, and his characteristics; The universal, humanistic properties and the dynamism of Ataturk’s ideas.

The fundamental structure of Turkish National Educational System has been set up by the Constitution of the Republic of Turkey and the Basic Law of National Education (2010). The following are the current constitutional principles underlining the Turkish Educational System (Eurydice, 2010; MEB, 2003):

- 1- Universality and equality
- 2- Fulfillment of individual and social needs
- 3- Freedom to choice
- 4- Right to education
- 5- Equality and opportunity
- 6- Education for all throughout life
- 7- Adherence to Ataturk’s reform principles
- 8- Education for democracy
- 9- Secularism
- 10- Scientific approach
- 11- Educational planning

- 12- Co-education
- 13- School-parent cooperation
- 14- Education everywhere (as supplementary to schooling)

As for the current Social Studies Curriculum, Turkey's candidacy for full EU membership has made it compulsory to make reforms in the field of education including Social Studies Curriculum. Therefore, "special attention is given to the recent curriculum reform of 2005 and the new Social Studies textbooks that have been redesigned as an aspect of Turkey seeking admission to the European Union. The Ministry of Education policy statements about the new curriculum and textbooks involve a claim that they promote critical thinking and open-mindedness, along with a student-centred approach" (Esen, 2007, p. 3). The new approach is closely related with the educational philosophy of Dewey and the Progressivism which will be examined in the second part of this study. In the 2005 elementary education curriculum, teachers were accepted merely as a guide instead of being as a transmitter (conveyor) of the knowledge in the social studies course. In the 2005 social studies course program, human being was mentioned as a whole with his biological, physiological, social and cultural sides, and both as a subject and as an object of the change. Therefore, three main teaching field/area including "individual", "society" and "nature" were stated, change was thought to be overall dimension covering all these learning fields. Changing role of teacher as a guide and child centered approach are the main features of progressive education as John Dewey stated in his writings at the beginning of the 20th century.

In 1924, Ataturk invited Dewey to examine and analyze the Turkish Educational System and make recommendations for restructuring and reorganizing the existing the educational system. Dewey accepted this invitation and went to Turkey in July 15, 1924 completing his visit on the 18th of September. At this point, one needs to ask: why did Ataturk invite Dewey to examine and analyze the Turkish educational system other than someone else? What was his importance? What is his belief on educational systems? What was his role on the modern Turkish Curriculum? The following part aims to find out answers to those questions.

John Dewey & His Beliefs on Educational Systems and His Impact on the Modernization of the Turkish Educational System

John Dewey was an American psychologist, philosopher, educator, social critic and political activist. Dewey's work is associated with philosophical pragmatism and he is one of the founders of the progressive movement in education. Dewey believed that education must engage with and enlarge experience. Education must be an exploration of thinking and reflection. Education must be an interaction with and an environment for learning. Education must be a democracy where all share in a common life that provides associational settings (Dewey, 1916).

Before he went to Columbia University as professor of philosophy in 1904, Dewey had been a professor of pedagogy at the University of Chicago, home of the "laboratory school" where he attempted to put into practice the ideas of "progressive education" formulated in *The School and Society (1900)* and *Democracy and Education (1916)*. Dewey's orientation was experimental, seeking the practical verification of hypotheses through ceaseless innovation.

The key to understanding Dewey on democracy is his understanding of governance. It is a way of life, an ethical ideal, and a personal commitment. Specifically, it is a way of life in which individuals are presumed to be self directing and able to pursue their own goals and projects. No society which maintains order through constant supervision and/or coercion can be rightly called democratic. Further, individual benefit and the common good are mutually enhancing in a democracy (Dewey, 1916; 1989; 2002).

The central focus of Dewey's criticism of the tradition of ethical thought is its tendency to seek solutions to moral and social problems in dogmatic principles and simplistic criteria which, in his view, were incapable of dealing effectively with the changing requirements of human events.

The social condition for the flexible adaptation that Dewey believed was crucial for human advancement is a democratic form of life, not instituted merely by democratic forms of governance, but by the inculcation of democratic habits of cooperation and public spiritedness, productive of an organized, self-conscious community of individuals responding to society's needs by experimental and inventive, rather than dogmatic, means. The development of these democratic habits, Dewey argues in *School and Society* (1900) and *Democracy and Education* (1916) must begin in the earliest years of a child's educational experience. Dewey rejected the notion that a child's education should be viewed as merely a preparation for civil life, during which disjoint facts and ideas are conveyed by the teacher and memorized by the student only to be utilized later on. The school should rather be viewed as an extension of civil society and continuous with it, and the student encouraged to operate as a member of a community, actively pursuing interests in cooperation with others. It is by a process of self-directed learning, guided by the cultural resources provided by teachers that Dewey believed a child is best prepared for the demands of responsible membership within the democratic community (Dewey, 1900;1916).

Dewey's educational philosophy proposes a child-oriented curriculum which promotes problem-solving strategies, conflict resolutions, critical thinking, and negotiation skills towards moderation; in short, towards the development of a mature adult human being, within the context of rights, obligations, and political freedom, to exercise those rights and obligations. Dewey's progressive perspective promotes the interaction between the child and its environment; it aims not at containment, but at open-mindedness towards risk and possibilities, which open the gateway of free choice and opportunity. Life is full of risks and there is no fail-safe insurance company or agent that can guarantee success without risk—failure is always a possibility within the context of trial and error. Dewey's pedagogy promotes change, development, and the progress of individuals and their respective societies (Dewey, 1900; 1916).

Dewey's concern was with the ideas implied by a democratic society and the application of these ideas to education. "The price that democratic societies will have to pay for their continuing health," Dewey argued, "is the elimination of an oligarchy—the most exclusive and dangerous of all—that attempts to monopolize the benefits of intelligence and the best methods for the profit of a few privileged ones" (1913, p. 127).

Dewey's Impact on the Modernization of Turkish Curriculum

In this part, under the light of Dewey's philosophy and his two reports on Turkish education, I intend to discuss the significance of Dewey's educational mission to Turkey.

Dewey's visit came at a time of social, cultural, and political transformation of Turkey. Atatürk invited Dewey in order to receive advice that would provide ideas with reforms and recommendations benefiting the Turkish educational system and propelling it towards a modern educational establishment. Therefore, Atatürk asked Dewey to survey the country's educational system and to recommend ways for its improvement (Dykhuizen 1973, Büyükdevenci, 1995) Atatürk must have been fully aware of Dewey's stature and significance in the United States and around the World (Gert and Miedema, 1996). Dewey had gained world-wide recognition, although a little less in an elite-conscious Europe, for his progressive education project conducted in Chicago. "Progressive education" was a label associated with Dewey. Progressive meant the battle against a classical curriculum, entertained in elite institutions of Europe for the children of the elite. Progressive also meant the reformation of a classical curriculum towards educating the majority, the citizens of a country contributing to the basic foundation of a democratic society. The most essential element for a democratic society was seen to be the literacy of the masses, boys and girls alike, for without literacy democracy is not possible. It was on that common ground that Dewey met Atatürk in the summer of 1924 in Ankara, Turkey (Gazo, 1996).

"After spending two months analyzing the educational system, Dewey prepared two reports. In the first report, which was written in Turkey, he made recommendations for better teaching training and the funding of education. In the second report, which he wrote in the United States, he made specific recommendations for the formation and an execution of educational plan, the development of schools as community centers, the reorganization of the Ministry of Public Instruction, the training and treatment of teachers, the redefinition of the school system, the improvement of health and hygiene issues in schools, the improvement of the discipline, and other areas of schooling" (Turan 1997, p. 4).

In the preliminary report, which is short, just seven pages for print, was submitted by John Dewey to the Turkish Government in September of 1924. It includes urgent suggestions for issues to be studied by commission of inquiry. (Dewey, 1939). Dewey starts his report by emphasizing the importance of improvement of teachers with the most progressive and efficient pedagogical methods "since without doubt the great body of teachers are earnest and sincere and since no real improvement of education can be made without improvement in the preparation of the teachers, both in scholarship and an acquaintance with the most progressive and efficient pedagogical methods in use in other parts of the world" (Dewey, 1983 as cited in Turan 1997).

In reports, Dewey advised against hurried and premature educational reforms. He insisted on the necessity for careful and extensive studies by Turkish educators; studies which would lead to a gradual formulation of a national educational plan by the nations' own leaders and experts. In some respects this recommendation

constitutes the most noteworthy aspect of his reports, and one which distinguishes him from most of the other foreign consultants. He thought that the existing educational system could be continued for another year or two, during which time the Ministry could set up a number of study commissions, gather data both at home and abroad, train needed specialists and then launch an eight or ten-year educational plan. He hoped that such studies and the resulting program could proceed without any kind of political influence.

In the “Report,” Dewey restates his fundamental educational conviction by emphasizing the dignity and respect that is due to the child. This is certainly a modern child, to be respected in terms of its own specific development towards a mature reasonable human being. Thus, the relevant remarks formulated in the “Report” are:

The great weakness of almost all schools, a weakness not confined in any sense to Turkey, is the separation of school studies from the actual life of children and the conditions and opportunities of the environment. The school comes to be isolated and what is done there does not seem to the pupils to have anything to do with the real life around them, but to form a separate and artificial world (p. 293).

This text reaffirms Dewey’s conviction in his progressive school ideas, worked out at the turn of the century in his Chicago school laboratory. In Chicago, huddled masses from Eastern Europe, and elsewhere, were to be integrated into the mainstream of American society; whereas, in Turkey, it was to be the rural peasants of Anatolia who were to be integrated into a great experiment, an enlightened and democratic Republic arising out of the ashes of a devastated Empire. Transforming the “Sick Man of Europe” (The Ottoman State) into a blossoming youth was no mean achievement, accomplished by Ataturk and many patriotic Turks. According to Gazo (1996) Dewey made some contributions to that transformation process, the great enlightenment experiment in Anatolia, even if only in a small measure. “His most visible impact was best observed in the policies and practices in the training of village teachers. The Village Institutes Project—launched in the early 1940s to introduce a model specific to Turkey—was extensively based on Dewey’s recommendations” (Uygun, 2008, p. 291).

Based on Dewey’s philosophy, education, as an institution of social engineering, provides society with a means to correct extremities of passions (Dewey, 1900; 1916; 1989; 2002). Thus, the educational system must be viewed as a social reconstruction promoting a democratic society (Dewey, 1916). Dewey pictured a democratic order for Turkey as well. He was aware, of course, that the newly-founded Republic of Turkey had to deal with different historical presuppositions, being of Turkish, Westernized (Modernized) or Islamic origin. But, he was convinced that, despite this, a democratic order, with its heart occupied by education, would turn out to be of universal value.

In general, the recommendations made by Dewey are historically significant in the development of the Turkish educational system. John Dewey “as a philosopher of education is still continuing to influence of the Turkish Education theoretically through his ideas on education, especially Pragmatism” (Büyükdüvenci, 1995, p. 23). Nevertheless, “it is difficult to practice his recommendations in a country where the

philosophy of education is strictly based on an “official state ideology” in a very centralized educational system” (Biesta & Miedema, 1996 as cited in Turan 1997, p. 19). However, Turkey’s candidacy for full EU membership has made it compulsory to make reforms in the field of education. The recent efforts made by the officials of Ministry of National Education to restructure the education system to meet with the EU’s standards has promising to show that almost 90 years later, Dewey’s recommendations seems to be understood and started to be implemented in the Turkish Educational System.

“The concept of competence has come to the attention in the context of European education policy due to a fundamental change in the way which education and knowledge is understood in the context of globalization and a rapidly changing work environment. Recent schooling policies in general are less orientated towards input and the process of knowledge transfer from one generation to the next. Instead they are tending to focus more on output and individual competences that enable the person to be an active, autonomous and motivated learner within a lifelong learning context (Tiana 2004 cited in Hoskins et al., 2008). Therefore, the learning of competences has refocused attention on the whole individual, including their attitudes, values and skills as well as knowledge.” (Hoskins, et al. 2008, p.15). In this regard, the latest social studies curriculum developed in Turkey in 2004 would be a good example to indicate how Turkey strives to harmonize its education system with the EU’s educational policy.

In the late 1920s, the historical suggestions of Dewey to restructure the Turkish education were revolutionary at that time so that they were not welcomed by the Ministry of Education officials since Dewey put emphasis on the importance of the social and cultural context of schools, and the local control of education (Ata, 2002; Bal, 1991). The top down reform efforts and domination of a single pattern and ideology purposely disregarded the culture of people. Consequently, the people lost trust in educational reform efforts and its leadership. However, today, it is obvious to realize that Dewey’s educational philosophy has a considerable impact on the modernization of Turkish educational system. For instance, most recently, projects like *Project of Democracy Education in Schools* are formulated to implement his views on democratic and progressive education (Uygun, 2008).

Conclusion

In this study I examined historical documents to understand the development of the social studies curriculum in Turkey and Dewey’s impact on the modernization of social studies curriculum and the Turkish educational system. Findings show that Dewey had a considerable impact on the transformation of Turkish education system from a traditional to a modern one. From Republic to present, social studies curriculum was changed periodically according to the social, economic and political needs and expectations of the period of its time. These changes were made chronically in 1924, 1926, 1930; 1932; 1936, 1948, 1962; 1968 and finally in 2005. While the Social studies programs has been revised or changed several times in the past, these changes occurred either by the direct influence of educational committees and educational councils or by the direct influence of foreign educational consultants like John Dewey.

The 1924 social studies curriculum carries the traces of temporary curriculum, which newly founded Republic of Turkey implemented without determining the current situation and practiced only for two years. This program focused on creating new and loyal citizens by using new values like nationalism, change, westernization and refusing dominance of religion (Öztürk, 2006; Üstel, 2004). Therefore, General Turkish History was given more importance than the histories of Islam and Ottoman Empire. This program also reflected essentialist perspective and employed teacher- and textbook-oriented education for social studies (Öztürk, 2006).

The 1926 social studies curriculum is the one, which completed political reform process and was mostly shaped by the suggestions of American educationalist John Dewey. He suggested in his first report (written in 1924) that education should be functional, practical, and related to real life. As a consequence of his recommendations, the Turkish Board of Education was founded in 1926 with the aim of developing improved teaching programs. Because of Dewey's influence, pragmatism became the main philosophy of the program. A new course called life studies was created for the first three years of primary schools by combining topics of history, geography, civics, science and nature classes (Ata, 1998). Turkish revolution and consciousness of citizenship were highly emphasized with the 1936 social studies curriculum. The 1948 social studies curriculum was designed to teach knowledge with overloaded content due to the increase in the number of subjects.

In the 1968 social studies curriculum was practiced nearly 30 years and the main purpose of the program was to create citizens believing that Turkish Republic is a national, democratic and social country based on human rights, and that Turkish Republic has an indivisible integrity with its land and people, and is a creative member of the world community (MEB, 1968). The name of the subject called "Studies on Society and Country" was changed into "Social Studies".

The 1998 social studies curriculum is generally a framework curriculum developed under the influence of behaviorist approach. The key concepts of former programs such as nationalism, secularism, patriotism, republicanism remained in their positions in the 1998 program. European Union norms and Western perspective affected the construction of program as well (MEB, 1998).

The 2005 social studies program has been developed based on the progressive and constructivist approach along with harmonization process with European Union. The program was designed by using interdisciplinary and thematic approaches and spiral principles. Concepts, skills and values were emphasized in the program with the modern pedagogical strategies, methods and techniques. With this last and current program, educational technologies are emphasized with alternative measurement and assessment models such as performance based assessment which is based on process of learning rather than results (MEB, 2005; Şahin, 2009). The recent efforts made by the officials of Ministry of National Education to restructure the education system to meet with the EU's standards has promising to show that almost 90 years later, Dewey's recommendations seems to be understood and started to be implemented in the Turkish Educational System.

One may ask what relevance Dewey's progressive philosophy of education has for contemporary Turkey. The reply may turn out as follows:

- Turkey need not adjust wholesale Dewey's entire educational suggestions;
- Turkey should make realistic adjustments of Dewey's pedagogy, taking into consideration the special conditions that exist in the Turkish society;
- Turkey's present ideas ought to encourage loyalty to its national identity in order to support a healthy psychology of its people not in a "standardized" manner, but in a spirit of a community of justice, freedom, and equal opportunity for boys and girls as well as for men and women (Gazo, 1996).

Consequently, education is a catalyst and designer for social change in a country. Especially, formal and non-formal educational institutions as in Turkey speed up the social change very rapidly. That is why Ataturk invited Dewey to investigate the Turkish educational system to accelerate the social, cultural and educational transformation of the new republic. In contemporary Turkey, as the population increases and the social life changes, the educational demands of the modern Turkish society are inevitably raising. Dewey's impact on the Turkish educational system is still visible as the present policymakers clearly make references to his works. Especially, with the current Social Studies Curriculum which was started to be implemented in 2005. This relatively "new" curriculum evidently emphasizes the importance of Dewey's Progressive pedagogy to the teaching of social studies education. Examining the historical development of social studies curriculum, (specifically this current social studies curriculum) proves that Dewey's educational philosophy has a considerable impact on the new curriculum and modernization of Turkish educational system.

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Miscellany

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