

# **Determining The Academic Knowledge Level Of Social Studies Teacher Candidates On Settlement Geography Of Turkey**

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## **Abstract**

Having a long history of settlement, Anatolia has a distinctive role in settlement geography. Despite the fact that people may cause changes in physical environment in various other ways, the conversion of physical geographic expression into a cultural geographic expression had been realized most vigorously where people were settled in. Therefore, through history the settlements have been the focus of all branches of the social sciences and have been researched. Most especially, it has been at the core of history and geography and has become one of their most popular research topics.

Being situated at the crossroads of three continents geographically, Turkey has attracted various civilizations since ancient times and increased the significance of settlements in here. Researches of settlements as a field of social studies have been one of the significant issues those should be handed down the rising generations. Increasing the academic knowledge level of social studies teacher candidates who are to pass these issues on rising generations, constitutes our subject matter.

For that purpose, an activity was organized within the context of a technical visit of 30 third grade students from Faculty of Education Department of Elementary School Division of Social Sciences Education, 10 of which were female and 20 male, within the scope of settlement geography, a sub-branch of Human and Economic Geography of Turkey, an excursion-observation activity at Konya (Çumra) Çatalhöyük, where we have grown wheat grass beforehand. Also the students were instructed via a descriptive study which was vocalized in order to emphasize the agricultural activities that have been initialized with the historical basis of Anatolia and human settlement in here. This study is based on phenomenology research design, among the qualitative research methods. The one-sample pretest-posttest method which includes the descriptive analysis was used in this study. 6 open ended questions were prepared for pretest and posttest. This study aimed at

increasing the academic level of teacher candidates on Çatalhöyük, which is considerably important with regard to settlement geography in Anatolia and thus, making the accumulation of knowledge outlast as they pass it on the rising generations.

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**Keywords:** Settlement geography, Çatalhöyük Settlement, Observation and Excursion in Social Studies

## INTRODUCTION

Having a long history of settlement, Anatolia has a distinctive role in settlement geography. Settlement is a region where people take shelter in, draw advantage from, perform social activities. Settlement geography is a branch of geography that investigates the places where people live, inhabit and the relations of these with places they are settled in (Izbrak, 1992). Settlement geography aims to investigate and explain the functions and their functions as of today, i.e. the social, cultural and economic force or powers that play a role in maintenance of their existence and improvement, in other words aims to investigate and expose the work-power resources (Doganay, vd., 2011). The settlement and economic fields of activities are strictly attached to one another as of reason and place (Tanoglu, 1969). All of the earth's surface parts settled by humans are organized as areas of utilization pursuant to function. And as a functional type, the settlement is the organization and distribution in the residential area (Tumertekin, 2015). It is a branch of geography that investigates settlements which people have created within a certain process of this organization; the roots, development and changes, features of the site (the physiognomy or morphology), roles of it (functions), distributions and parameters (Ozgur, 2010). It is possible to sum this field up basically in two sections: Rural settlement and urban settlement. Rural settlement is related to the researches on; the characteristics of the settlements generated temporarily or permanently by people rather engaged in agriculture, primarily involved in occupations of various products' farming and livestock breeding, various characteristics of the rural habitations that constitute these settlements, to what extent they comply with the conditions of the environment surrounding them and their mutual relations with this environment. Cities are man-made structures, terrestrial landscape etched by human communities with official and public buildings, roads and streets, parks etc. (Goney, 1984).

Little is known about how the settlements had originated and why they have been changed in time. Despite the fact that people may cause changes in physical environment in various other ways, the conversion of physical geographic expression into a cultural geographic expression had been realized most vigorously where people were settled in. Therefore, the

settlements have been the centre of a whole human geography branch. It can be said that, the geographical studies on rural settlements were initialized by Karl Ritter's works in the early 1800s. His refers to the settlement patterns, country houses and settlement history that he regarded as geospatial components, within the scope of complex relationship between human and space, underlies also the settlement geography. Thus emerged a settlement geography in Germany about 1891. Meitzen's (1895) work of 4 volumes had categorized settlements in Germany starting from 1768 and constituted a basis for subsequent studies on rural geography, as well. Although Hettner (1895) was writing on locality of human settlements, Schlüter opened up the area in 1899, so as to be deemed as the founder of "settlement geography" (Tumertekin, 2015).

An approach within the context of relation between human and space is demonstrated not only in generic works on settlement geography (Schwartz, 1961; McGaugh, 1970; Hudson, 1976; Dainel ve Hopkinson, 1989; Carter, 1990; Tolun-Denker, 1977), but also in other works that are syntheses of human geography. As indicated above, most of the earliest works on settlement geography were realized by Germans and essentially on two subjects: House types (including distribution, architectural style and construction materials) and urban centres. Most attempts to categorize the rural settlement patterns in Europe adopted the criteria of morphological structure. Hence Albert Demangeon (1920-1939), one of the geographers constituted the base of rural geography, also took the form as a basic criterion for his studies on France. In Europe, where is plentiful with regard to location patterns that reflects a long and complicated cultural history and with regard to variety in architectural style, geographers had considered rural settlements as a detail within their studies; whereas in USA early rural investigations were rather maintained for the purposes of attracting settlers into vast lands in the name of colonization (Tumertekin, 2015). Thus improving, the history of settlement geography has lead to advanced investigations on historical dwelling units still being shaped in the same way today. As these are being investigated on, and new progresses are realized, the locations of these historical settlements become more and more significant. The progress realized at these fields and the economic activities in these fields have been attracting today's people and the struggles against nature by techniques of those ages been surprising them. The location preference of the historical settlements has been an issue evaluated seperately, making the geographical values prominent in today's settlement geography.

In settlement history, Anatolia had attracted humankind to itself as a result of its geographical location and had been providing the diversity and continuity of its own settlement history. The primary particularities of

Turkey with regard to its geographical location are Anatolia's being in the central position of the country and at the centre of many land masses, and being situated on a passageway-area (Darkot, 1972). Also the redundancy of these settlement today, is a background information that should be studied as a field of social sciences and be presented to peoples inhabiting here. The sub-branches of social sciences such as archaeology, art history, history and geography are the ones to investigate and expose these issues. Through history, the studies of these fields have revealed these settlements and increased the fund of knowledge on settlement geography in today's world. Having many types of these settlements, the Anatolian territories today have many archaeological sites opened to visit.

Anatolian civilizations have a long history extending from today back to pre-historic phases. As the ones living on these territories for about one thousand year, prior to anyone else it is our natural right and duty to look out for the whole settlement history that survives from prehistoric ages until today (Strabon, 2000). Among the studies on geography realized in Turkey until today either by native or by foreign researchers, the ones on settlement geography of Turkey are disappointingly few in number. Also the studies on sub-branches of human and economic fields are worse than the issues of physical geography in both quality and quantity. Before investigating the reasons of this fact and showing the reasons why these type of studies fail to be efficient, we should put the primary factor of that first of all the studies of human and economic geographies are very difficult and they require intensive labour and plenty of time, and having all these in mind, finally the feeling arises by the fact that most of the time these studies come up to be unsuccessful, made the researchers abandon this field. Moreover, another reason why there are scarcely any studies on settlement geography is there are a few people qualified to do this kind of research. And the fact that very few personnel was trained to study these issues is another thing that should be taken into consider. Such negative instances similar to these which appear in the field of settlement geography are more or less frequently met with in other countries from all around the world as well. Beside the difficulties of dealing with the subjects of settlement geography, Turkey's being situated right at the meeting point of the three continents which constitute the old world, put this region in a bridgehead land position. This feature of Anatolia, turned the mentioned region into the busiest route on behalf of peoples, armies, invaders through all historical ages. Thus, the geopolitical position of Anatolia that remained almost unchanged through all the historical eras along with the countless human activities occurred there, endowed the region with a unique feature brought by many geographical problems. Very attractive and vivid in appearance, this feature actually made Anatolia a very loaded, complicated and vague field with countless problems for the

researchers (Tuncdilek, 1967). As this position of settlement geography attracted many peoples to Anatolia and increased the number of settlements here, it led to the emergence of cultural diversities of these settlements on the other hand. So, with respect to settlement geography and settlement history, Anatolia is a land with so rich background and the history of settlement with that background is impossible to compare with almost any other region on earth. The main cave settlements of our country are Karain, Beldibi, Belbaşı and Öküzini caves near Antalya, Kadıni cave near Alanya, and a cave settlement in Samandağı district of Hatay. The most widely known ones among the Neolithic settlements in Anatolia are Burdur-Hacılar, Çatalhöyük near Konya-Çumra, Çayönü (between Ergani-Maden), Aşıklıhöyük-Aksaray, Can Hasan-Karaman, and Kuruçay-Burdur (Karabag & Sahin, 2014). Whilst the geographical conditions of Anatolia favourable to settlement had led many civilizations settle there at ancient times, gradually emerged the issues of settlement geography. One of the civilizations settled here in that era, Hittites came into Anatolia in the 19<sup>th</sup> century BC. As to Urartians, they had been in Eastern Anatolia during the time Hittites were living in Central Anatolian. Phrygians had settled in Western Anatolia where had convenient climatic conditions, fertile agricultural lands, rich forests and bonanzas. Lydians had been within the boundaries of lowlands Bakırçay, Gediz, Little Meander and the Maeander in present day's Aegean Region. Ionians had been settled by the coast of Western Anatolia, particularly in peninsulas (Sahin, vd., 2006). These exceptional civilizations are of great importance in settlement geography of the world as much as in settlement geography of Anatolia. During and after the Medieval Age, the settlements and cultural marks of Roman, Byzantium, Anatolian Seljuks, Anatolian Beyliks and Ottoman states can be observed. These civilizations cited overall, consist of the issues those should be studied in terms of settlement geography and be brought to light. As we have mentioned above, when these subjects had been investigated in detail as of their history of settlement, settlement geography was underestimated and not studied adequately. Hereby, a prediction comes into the picture that as a course subject due importance is not given on settlement geography in the curriculum of Turkey's human and economic geographies lectured in social sciences teaching departments. Determining how to increase the academic knowledge level of teacher candidates on settlement geography is our priority issue here.

“Social Studies” consist a considerable part of basics and general information of the issues on people living in a society, that society's community life, relationships, culture, its relative position within the world societies and relations with various nations. However Social Studies; that take place within the syllabus of elementary education along with History, Geography, Citizenship and Human Rights Education; principally include

subjects taken from Sociology, Economics, Psychology, Anthropology etc. which are totally called “Social Sciences” and were rendered more simplified and concrete in order to make them appropriate for the level of students of that age. Knowledge of geography, which is included in Social Studies, makes students gather information about their environment and enable them to use this knowledge. Students become adept in connecting their physical environment with their economic efficiency, life style and they familiarize themselves with their environment, understand that the natural environment has an impact on human being, as well as the human being has an impact on natural environment (Akbas, 2002; Cakmak, 2006).

As a lecture with an interdisciplinary approach of syllabus, Social Studies was initially adopted in 1960s in Turkey (Venc, 2005). It was designated under the name of Social Studies in 1958 and primarily given to the 4th and 5th grades of elementary school each for five course hours weekly (Can, 1998). Whereas, starting from 1960s the intensity of information content of History and Geography within Social Studies was bated, and it was Sociology, Anthropology, Economics, Politics and Socio-psychology what were concentrated on. In our country on the other hand, by the curriculum of 1968, History, Geography and Citizenship courses were combined under the name of Social Studies (Erden, 1998: 9). In 1985, Social Studies education was excluded from secondary schools’ programme, and National Geography, National History were included instead. And later, starting from 1992, a new schedule of Citizenship Studies was put into practice; in 1993, some modifications were done on the schedules of National History and Citizenship Studies (Can, 1998). Pursuant to the relevant law’s implementation of 8-year mandatory continuing education in 1997, this Schedule was executed until 1998. In 1998, a new *Curriculum for Social Studies in Elementary School* was brought into force which included 4th-7th grades (Venc, 2005). After the Law of 8-year mandatory continuing education of elementary school came into force in 1997, as per decree numbered 143 and dated 10.09.1997 of Head Council of Education and Morality of Ministry of Natural Education, National History and National Geography courses which had been taught at elementary schools were removed from the programmes; it was resolved to put Social Studies course into the programme instead. The new “Curriculum for Social Studies in Elementary School” that was agreed upon the resolution numbered 62 and dated 02.04.1998 of Head Council of Education and Morality of Ministry of Natural Education, was for 4th, 5th, 6th and 7th grades of elementary school and aimed to “enhance the quality of education, instead of a rote-learning based education system, fulfill the needs of the day” (MEB, 1998). It was forseen that the course of Social Studies would be included in the schedule

of 4th, 5th, 6th and 7th grades of elementary schools for three course hours weekly (Can, 1998).

Social Studies programmes in Turkey, was started in 1998 with purposes of progressing intensive programmes considering improvements in the world. These studies yielded some results in 2005. Hence, the new educational programme of Social Studies for 4th and 5th grades prepared by Ministry of National education and which were implemented in pilot provinces with fruitful results, started to be implemented in all provinces since 2005-2006 (Ozturk, 2006). And since from 2006-2007 school year, it has been implemented for 6th grades also. The improvement of this programme was based on social constructivism perspective which lays emphasis on thematic learning, problem solving and cooperative learning. Social Studies is a curriculum that makes use of the content taken from social and human sciences and blends it into an interdisciplinary approach in order to raise efficient citizens who are able to make knowledge-based decisions and get solutions under the changing conditions in many aspects (Ozturk, 2006). In units of Social Studies courses; issues of social sciences such as history, geography, economics, sociology, anthropology, psychology, philosophy, politics and law, and issues of human rights and citizenship studies are being dealt collectively. So the teachers teach the subjects in a well-rounded manner, instead of in units one by one, i.e history unit, geography unit, human rights and citizenship unit etc (Komisyon, 2006).

Student admission to the department of Social Studies Teaching commenced in 1993. The schedule was changed in 1998, and lately a modification was done on the schedule in 2006 (YOK, 2007). When the Social Studies Teaching department was opened in 1993, it included the lectures of General Geography, Geomorphology, General Human Geography, Climatology I - II, Hydrography, Physical Geography of Turkey, Countries Geography I – II – III, Political Geography, Geography of Plants I – II, Energy and Underground Resources, General Economic Geography, Regional Geography of Turkey I – II, Soil Geography, Human Geography of Turkey, Transportation Geography, Economic Geography of Turkey and Environmental Problems, which were of fifty three credits in total (YOK, 1995). In accordance with the programme that has been implemented since 2006 on the other hand, Social Studies Teaching department has geography courses of twenty credits in total, which are General Physical Geography, General Human and Economic Geography, Countries Geography, Human and Economic Geography of Turkey, Physical Geography of Turkey, Political Geography, Environmental Education, Environmental Education and Today's Global Problems (YOK, 2006).

It is only possible that the knowledge of geography would improve the quality of human life, to change one's outlook on society and environment; provided that geography becomes a part of life, and the knowledge of geography could be utilized independently of time and space (Efe, 1996-1997). Notwithstanding, the qualification of the teacher and teaching methods applied play an important role in providing geography is learned during the course time. Lecturing, question-answer, problem-solving, demonstration, excursion-observation, business game and experiment are the methods frequently used in teaching geography (Doganay, 2002). Some of the methods among the ones applied within the concepts of learning and teaching are also applicable to teaching geography (Akbulut, 2004). One of the ever increasingly seen common active teaching methods, the excursion-observation technique has become prominent recently, and been a frequently applied method in teaching issues of geography in social studies teaching departments. From this point of view, here the excursion-observation technique is considered as an instrument that may affect the academic knowledge level of social studies teacher candidates on settlement geography of Turkey.

### **1.Objective of the Research**

The objective of this study is to determine the academic knowledge level of a group of 30 Social Studies teacher candidates from Niğde University – Faculty of Education, on Çatalhöyük settlement in Çumra district of Konya province.

This study aimed at determining whether there are differences in the academic knowledge level of the Social Studies teacher candidates from Faculty of Education of Niğde University on Çatalhöyük settlement in Çumra district, Konya province after the formal, direct instruction technique and after lecturing at the site during the excursion-observation period.

### **2. Research Method**

This research was performed by phenomenology pattern “that focuses on the phenomena we are aware of, however we do not have a profound and thorough cognizance of”, which is a qualitative observation method (Yıldırım & Simsek, 2006). The survey was carried out with one-sample pretest-posttest design including descriptive analysis. 6 open ended questions were prepared for pretest and posttest.

#### **2.1. Target Population and Sample of the Research**

All teacher candidates that study in 2014-2015 academic year at Niğde University – Faculty of Education Department of Elementary School Division of Social Sciences Education constitutes the target population of the

study. The sample of this study constitutes of 30 teacher candidates chosen among 3 classes who studied in the 2014-2015 academic year at Niğde University, Faculty of Education Department of Elementary School Division of Social Sciences Education, 10 of which are female and 20 male students.

**Table 1. Distribution of participants of study according to their gender**

Gender	f	%
Female	10	33.3
Male	20	66.6
Total	30	100

As shown in Table 1, 33,3% of the candidates participated in the study are female students, 66,6% are male.

## 2.2. Data Collection Instrument

In the preparation phase of the study a literature review was conducted on settlement, settlement geography, settlement in the world and settlement geography of Turkey. Following that, a literature review on geography teaching techniques within the education of Social studies and learning techniques used in the education of geography was the main focus. No sources were available on teaching of settlement geography, but scientific studies on education of general geography were reviewed and the necessary preliminary works were carried out. The permission of Provincial Directorate of Culture and Tourism of Konya was obtained before the excursion-observation study to Çatalhöyük archaeological site was realized.

By preparing the open-ended questions, the opinion of experts in the field of human and economic geography were sought. Subsequent to the expert opinion process, in accordance with the views of an assessment and evaluation specialist and on a linguist's reviews, necessary changes and last editing were accomplished. There had been 8 questions at the preparation phase, whereas it was reduced to 6 questions after the required validity and reliability tests were done and upon the expert opinions. Pretest and posttest were applied in order to determine whether there had been changes in the level of academic knowledge of Social Studies Teacher candidates on education of settlement geography of Turkey at the end of excursion-observation.

## 2.3. Analysis of the Data

Afer the survey with the Social Studies teacher candidates were carried out by both pretest and posttest executions, all the survey forms were checked one by one. They were categorized according to gender groups, and the answers given at the pretest and posttest were gathered under the identical groups. Among the answers given to each questions, the ones at the

same category were classified and counted, and the answers given were tabulated according to frequency ratio percentages.

### 3.Findings and Commentaries

Within the scope of this survey applied to teacher candidates from Niğde University Faculty of Education, data related to 1 sub-problem was analyzed. The findings and commentaries that consist of percentage frequency data collected as the results of pretest and posttest are below.

**Table 2: Where is the first settlement in Anatolia?**

Settlement(Before the Excursion)		Settlement(After the Excursion)	
f	%	f	%
Çatalhöyük	22 73.3	Çatalhöyük	25 83.3
Total	30 100	Total	30 100

As shown in Table 2, by analyzing the results of pretest and posttest, it was observed that Çatalhöyük as an answer to the first tumulus settlement in Anatolia had almost equal rates at pretest and posttest. The average rate for the answer Çatalhöyük settlement was 83.3% at the posttest, while it was 73.3% at the pretest. That the teacher candidates of Social studies field having a certain educational level, demonstrates their high academic knowledge level on settlement geography of Anatolia.

**Table 3: What is the impact of climate on settlement?**

Climate (Before the Excursion )		Climate (After the Excursion)	
f	%	f	%
Suitability for settlement	18 60	Suitability for settlement	26 86.6
Total	30 100	Total	30 100

As seen in Table 3, when the results of pretest and posttest were evaluated at the end of the study, an average of 60% of responding rate was obtained for the question about the impact of climate on settlement at the pretest, and 86.6% at the posttest. The difference of 26.6% between pretest and posttest reveals the significance of excursion-observation technique. Pretest answers given by social studies teacher candidates show the high academic knowledge level of them. Moreover, the difference of 26.6% at the end of the technical visit demonstrates the effect of practical instruction at the field on the level of academic knowledge.

**Table 4: What is the impact of volcanic soil on agriculture?**

(Before the Excursion)		(After the Excursion)	
f	%	f	%
Fertile land	12 40	Fertile land	15 50
Total	30 100	Total	30 100

As shown in Table 4, as the results were evaluated, a 40% of decrease was observed at the level of academic knowledge of teacher candidates with regard to their educational level at the pretest and posttest. It

could be assumed that social studies teacher candidates are not instructed as much extensively as geography teaching students at geography courses. The necessity of laying emphasis on practical technique of excursion-observation especially for physical and human geography becomes prominent here. That the awareness was of 50% rate at posttest run, demonstrated they understood the impact of volcanic soil on agriculture and comprehended the significance of fertile land in agriculture by 10% of differentiation.

**Table 5: Which was the first cultivated agricultural product in Anatolia?**

<b>Agricultural Product(Before the Excursion)</b>	f	%	<b>Agricultural Product(After the Excursion)</b>	f	%
Wheat	3	10	Wheat	24	80
Total	30	100	Total	30	100

As Table 5 shows, teacher candidates' 10% of responding rate at the pretest, against 80% at the posttest, constituting a difference of 70%, proves the success of excursion-observation technique. Especially applying in practice and growing wheat grass out of the protected area of Çatalhöyük beforehand, enhanced the effects of activity on academic knowledge level of the teacher candidates.

**Table 6: Which was the first mine extracted from ground in Anatolia?**

<b>Mine (Before the Excursion)</b>	f	%	<b>Mine(After the Excursion)</b>	f	%
Obsidian	2	6.6	Obsidian	14	33.3
Total	30	100	Total	30	100

As seen in Table 6, with a 6.6% rate of responding, the pretest revealed that the academic knowledge level of social studies teacher candidates on the mine obsidian extracted in Anatolia was not high enough. Whereas, after the pretest an increase to 33.3% rate demonstrated the significance of excursion-observation technique factor in their level of academic knowledge. Particularly, the historical remains exhibited at the museum in Çatalhöyük delivered a success of 26.7% increase in their level of academic knowledge.

**Table7: For what purpose was this mine used?**

<b>(Before the Excursion)</b>	f	%	<b>(Before the Excursion - Male)</b>	f	%
Sharp tool	4	13.3	Sharp tool	16	53.3
Total	30	100	Total	30	100

Table 7 shows that, at the end of the pretest applied to social studies candidates it was understood that the academic knowledge level was not good enough on the usage of obsidian mine extracted in Anatolia, remaining at a rate of 13.3% responding. On the other hand, by the end of posttest

responding rate was increased to 53.3% revealing the impact created by excursion-observation technique. Especially the excursion-observation at the Çatalhöyük museum made the students become enthusiastic and raised their interest in historical remains. The difference of 40% occurred between pretest and posttest results, reflects the effect of investigations at the museum on academic knowledge level of the students.

**Table 8: The rates of answers according to gender**

Before the Excursion			f	%
1.What is the significance of Anatolia in world's human settlement?	M	Çatalhöyük	16	80
	F	Çatalhöyük	6	60
2. What is the impact of climate on settlement?	M	Suitability Settlement	for 14	70
	F	Suitability Settlement	for 4	40
3. What is the impact of volcanic soil on agriculture ?	M	Fertile Land	8	40
	F	Fertile Land	4	40
4. Which was the first cultivated agricultural product in Anatolia?	M	Wheat	2	10
	F	Wheat	1	10
5. Which was the first mine extracted from ground in Anatolia ?	M	Obsidian	1	5
	F	Obsidian	1	10
6. For what purpose the first mine extracted from ground in Anatolia was used ?	M	Sharp Tool	3	15
	F	Sharp Tool	1	10
After the Excursion			<b>f</b>	<b>%</b>
1. What is the significance of Anatolia in world's human settlement?	M	Çatalhöyük	18	90
	F	Çatalhöyük	7	70
2. What is the impact of climate on settlement?	M	Suitability Settlement	for 18	90
	F	Suitability Settlement	for 8	80
3. What is the impact of volcanic soil on agriculture ?	M	Fertile Land	12	60
	F	Fertile Land	3	30
4. Which was the first cultivated agricultural product in Anatolia?	M	Wheat	16	80
	F	Wheat	8	80
5. Which was the first mine extracted from ground in Anatolia ?	M	Obsidian	6	30
	F	Obsidian	4	40
6. For what purpose the first mine extracted from ground in Anatolia was used ?	M	Sharp Tool	10	50
	F	Sharp Tool	6	60

As shown in Table 8, comparing the answers given by female and male students at the pretest and posttest applied to social studies candidates, it was determined that the academic knowledge level of male teacher

candidates on settlement geography of Turkey is approximately 10% higher than female teacher candidates. When the answers given at the pretest and posttest were compared, the conclusion was drawn that academic knowledge level and comprehensive knowledge on the field of male teacher candidates are higher than the female candidates’.

## **DISCUSSION AND RESULTS**

Parallel to the improvements in today’s world, in this era of technology and science, significant improvements are observed in training technologies and teaching methods as well, and new approaches are being adopted. In developed countries these practical instruction studies are very common and have been applied in the field of relevant environment. As this practical instruction method have been carried out for a long time all around the world, in our country it was not quite understood by teacher candidates and direct instruction method went on being in use during courses, even though the constructivist perspective had come into effect since date 2005. Yet, the studies on constructivist instructions at many divisions and departments of Education Faculties have increased and practical instruction studies have been accelerated in recent years. Especially, practical instruction studies such as excursion-observation at the museums, archaeological sites and natural environments among divisions and departments of social studies fields of Education Faculties have increased recently. Since 2005, future teachers studying at Education Faculties have been contributing to these studies that support practical training as well, and they have been planning projects to attract attentions on practical instruction methods. Even though scarcely, the practical excursion-observation training is endeavoured to realize in the fields of history and geography including social studies teaching in our country. One of these, the first “Summer Workshop of Archaeology” in the world, aims at planting the historical awareness in 600 primary school students. The second of it shall be carried out this year, again for primary school students, which was prepared within the scope of “Training, Education, Management, Prehistory in the Mediterranean (TEMPER) Project” which is a Project conducted by the History Foundation and as a subsidiary of Çatalhöyük Researchment Project. Drawing considerable interest of teachers, students and the local population, the Project shall provide hundreds of children the opportunity to meet their 9 thousand-year old ancestry (<http://www.turizmdebusabah.com/haberler/dunyanin-ilk-arkeoloji-yaz-atolyesi-catalhoyukte-22007.html>).

Therefore, as the excursion-observation focused practical training in history courses becomes more and more common, ‘the method of teaching at historical sites’ is also a student-oriented method which encourages students

to think and investigate, as much as it improves their knowledge, skills, and analysis and assessment capabilities. Instruction method applied at historical sites enable students to learn the issues by seeing in person and experiencing them, and thus the new knowledge would be permanent. Also it makes it easier for students to feel connected to history, and this way it raises awareness of historical and cultural values of our country. In short, the instruction method applied at historical sites makes history courses more enjoyable and more pragmatic for the learners (Avcı. Öner, 2015). Whereas, on the contrary of the incresement in this kind of technical visits to museums and historical sites in curriculum of history courses, in curriculums of geography in human and economic geography courses there has been no technical school trips until this day. Only there are some practical technical visits related to trainings on nature and environment that includes the field of geography. Despite the diversity of settlement geography of Turkey, there have been no excursion-observation activities organized to these sites related to the constructivist education in our country. Particularly in social studies teaching, on the contrary of practical training implementation in history field, this study of excursion-observation organized to Çatalhöyük settlement is the first study of its kind in geography field. It shall be possible that teacher candidates would conduct a vigorous training on settlement geography of Turkey in future, in direct proportion to the excursion-observation training practices which rise their academic knowledge level. The results of the excursion-observation practical training to Çatalhöyük settlement in Çumra district of Konya province organized for these purposes with a group of 30 teacher candidates from Department of Elementary School Division of Social Sciences Education, obtained by the evaluation of pretest-posttest are indicated as below;

The propotional increase in the differentiation of answers given pretest and posttest of 30 teacher candidate participants of the settlement geography of Turkey lecture, shows that the academic knowledge level of the students were raised. When these are examined taking the comparison of pretest and posttest in this study into consideration, the differentiations are clearly observed. While there is not much difference in terms of percentage between pretest and posttest results in table 2, as to the answers given to the question on climate impact in table 3, when the rate of 60% in pretest is compared to the 86.6% in posttest, a difference of 26.6% is seen. Also the difference between the answers given in the pretest and posttest to the question on first cultivated agricultural product in Anatolia, in table 5 is of 70%. And the difference between the answers given in the pretest and posttest to the question on first mine that was extracted in Anatolia, in table 6 is of 26.7%. The difference between the answers given in the pretest and posttest to the question on what purpose was the mentioned mine used for, in table 7 is of

40%. Here also the affirmative consequences of using excursion-observation technique during social studies teaching within geography courses come into the picture. In particular, the practical activity of growing wheat grass and scrutinizing the tools at the museums one by one demonstrating their functions, brought positive influences to the improvement of academic knowledge level of the teacher candidates. On the other hand, the proportional differences between the answers of female and male students to the open-ended questions in favour of male students, show that male teacher candidates' attending behaviour level is higher. However, the fact that female teacher candidate quorum is lower within the total might have affected these proportional results negatively.

## **SUGGESTIONS**

As all of the results of the excursion-observation training based on constructivist perspective of education conducted at Çatalhöyük which included the settlement geography of Turkey were evaluated, there had been an academic fund of knowledge obtained which provided the teacher candidates a lifetime background information they can hand down rising generations. Therefore, excursions-observation type technical visits should be included in curriculums and made extended for the geography courses within the academic programmes of Social Studies Education departments in Education Faculties. These excursion-observation studies to the areas in immediate surroundings should not especially include in issues of history only, but also the issues of geography. Along with these, activities within the context of issues should be carried out in order to enhance the academic knowledge level of teacher candidates.

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