



Content Analysis of the Social Sciences book in Sixth Grade Primary School Based on Content Selection Indices

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to analyze the content of the Social Sciences book in sixth-grade primary school based on content selection indices (including the principle of importance, the validity principle, the interest principle, the utility principle, and the principle of the ability to learn). The research was conducted within the framework of a quantitative approach and content analysis. The statistical population of the research is the entire content of the Social Sciences book in sixth-grade primary school, and all sentences and pictures were studied as census. The data collection tool was a checklist of content analysis based on content selection index. The validity of the checklist was approved by a group of experts and specialists, and its reliability coefficient was obtained as 93.75. The results generally show that in content analysis based on content selection index (5 items) in checklist, the average of the total frequency of the five components was 45.51%. Therefore, according to the obtained results, the content of the Social Sciences book in sixth-grade primary school has been provided less than the average based on the content selection index. So it is essential that in compiling the mentioned book, more attention should be paid to content selection index.

Keywords: content analysis, Social Sciences book, primary school sixth grade, content selection index.

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INTRODUCTION

The task of training and educating of society's individuals as a basic and fundamental factor is the duty of education system. Basically the goal of establishing an education system around the world, from primary education to higher education, is generally to respond to the demands and consider the ultimate purpose of the society. The ultimate goals of education can be summarized in realization of the two general aims: to foster human personality and meet the social needs.

Education is a process that tries to change and modify the behavior of the learners and acts to realize the specified purposes. In this wide area, some various factors are influential; the most influential role is up to curriculum that includes goals, content, methods and evaluation [1]. Meanwhile, training and educating in primary school as a part of Education system in each society has a vital and determinant role in the future of students, because the addressees of the textbooks in this period are children and presenting the message and educational contents to them should be done with precision and precaution, and following them the officials who prepare the contents and also the lesson planners have a heavy duty. Textbooks are one of the most important sources and references of learning for students in each educational system

and in Iran they play one of the important roles in curriculums. In other words, in Iran, the most of the educational activities are done in the framework of the textbooks and the most activities and educational experiences of teacher and students are organized based on it. This reality has caused that the experts and scholars study and analyze the educational contents of educational periods according to the needs of the learners [2].

The importance of textbooks in primary school is most considerable because they are the most important informational source of children and their parents and generally the analysis of the contents of textbooks of this period can create some positive changes in their compiling method and designing and also the perspective of the children of this period that are the future generation of the country [3].

One of the most important and most essential issues and topics that are thought in primary school as a book is *the Social Sciences*. Social plans constitute a part of the general training program of the schools, and in order one of the members of the society can live better with the others, these programs are necessary. The purpose of this program is the development of knowledge, skills, aptitudes, and attitudes necessary to continue living in the community [4].

Social Sciences deal with people, the surrounding world and people's situation of life, in addition to their relations. The importance of the surrounding world and the living conditions in thought, self-knowledge, the quality of life and belief in the future are the main aspects of *Social Sciences*. Another aspect is human activity and his activity during the passing of time as a political, economical, and cultural entity as well as a user of sources and a human entity among the other human entities [5].

The necessity of research about the content of curriculum of *Social Sciences* is of particular importance. Through this course, the learners acquire the necessary knowledge about the milieu and social relations, gain the required skills about social activities and also achieve the positive social attitudes toward life [6]. In the present study, *The Social Sciences book* in primary school sixth grade has been studied. Considering that this is the first year of adding the sixth grade to primary school education and the first period of compiling the sixth grade *Social Sciences book* in the country (with code 34/5), the results and findings of this research can help authorities, practitioners, curriculum planners, and executives to revise and strengthen the curricula, leading to improved efficiency of this book.

The method has been used to study this book is the content analysis method. "Content analysis refers to a method that is applied regularly and objectively to determine the characteristics of messages. In this method, the messages or information are coded regularly and are classified so that the researcher could analyze them quantitatively. This method is applied for each form of human relations- from allusions to textbooks as well as from information boards to television commercial messages" [7]. In other words, the content analysis method is a qualitative and quantitative method that deals with the analysis of communicative messages objectively and systematically and by using it we can inference some results about the creator of the message, its addressee and social conditions governing the communicative process [8].

Also in this study, the content analysis of sixth grade primary school *Social Sciences book* has been done based on the content selection index. Among the factors that today have made reviewing and revising and correcting the contents of curriculum necessary is the problem of science explosion. Explosion of human knowledge has changed the curriculum in many cases such as the organization of knowledge, approaches to curriculum, methods of teaching-learning, and evaluation procedures. So we should pay much more attention in selecting the proper content and its appropriateness and integration with the intended purposes. A some of the goals of curriculum is to acquire the knowledge and information, so the content should be selected in direction of achieving this goal [6].

In the present study, the principles and criteria of content selection that the researcher tries to compare the content with them are as the following:

Important principle: Important principle means to measure the importance of the kind of content that has superior preference than other issues and topics in relation to the same subject [6].

Validity principle: The content of textbooks should be chosen on the basis of the most recent and authentic sources, and according to present conditions, changes, and needs [9].

Interest principle: Interest principle means pay attention to the needs and interests of the students in selecting the content of course. This principle is more considered by those who use the student-based approach in curriculum [10].

Utility principle: the utility principle in the subject-based curriculum refers to the rate of success of curriculum in transferring the knowledge and information that are used in future profession and other activities of the adults. In the other words, the utility principle means the rate of the knowledge and information that is presented to the learners in order they use it in future life in a good way. But according to the ideas of the advocates of the student-based approach, it is a content that is most helpful

and beneficial to help individuals to acquire a correct understanding of his/her identity and to obtain the meaning in the life [6].

Ability to learn: According to this principle, the content must be selected that is fitted with the characteristics of learners in always.

Therefore, the main questions of the study consist of:

- Up to which rate has the content of the primary school sixth grade *Social Sciences book* been developed based on the content selection index?
- If the content of the primary school sixth grade *Social Sciences book* has been developed based on the Importance Principle?
- If the content of the primary school sixth grade *Social Sciences book* has been developed based on the Validity Principle?
- If the content of the primary school sixth grade *Social Sciences book* has been developed based on the Interest Principle?
- If the content of the primary school sixth grade *Social Sciences book* has been developed based on the Utility Principle?
- If the content of the primary school sixth grade *Social Sciences book* has been developed based on the Ability to learn Principle?

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The present research has been done in the framework of a quantitative approach and as content analysis. The statistical population includes the all content of the *Social Sciences book* in grade-six primary school. For sampling, all sentences and pictures of this book have been selected as the sample; in other words, the whole book was studied as census. The data collection instrument was the research-made checklist of content analysis based on content selection index.

Table 1: the content analysis checklist based on content selection index

	principle	indices
content analysis checklist	Important principle	Statement of the necessity and importance of the subject matters Encouragement of students to think about various problems
	Validity principle	The use of new and up-to-date subjects The use of valid and documented subjects Compatibility of the content with students' needs and interests
based on content selection index	Interest principle	The use of various and attractive pictures The use of the examples and cultural-social samples
	Utility principle	Stating the usage and benefits of discussed subjects in the present and future life of students
	Ability to learn principle	The clarity of sentences, idioms and words Understandability based on students' mental ability

Also in line with data analysis in content analysis method based on content selection indices, the researcher first studied the total content of the book line by line and then extracted the intended concepts in it. Then, he analyzed all pictures one by one and selected the intended pictures, and specified the frequency table and frequency percentage for each concept. Next, the total frequency table and concepts' frequency percentage in the *Social Sciences book* were calculated and the diagram related to each table was prepared. Thus, the discussion, interpretation and conclusion are based on the obtained results.

In testing the validity of the checklist, the author has used the view of related professors and specialists in selection indices and organizing the content, and finally the checklist was confirmed by these specialists and experts. Also, for testing the reliability of the checklist, compound reliability coefficient method was used that its formula is as follows:

$$\text{Compound reliability coefficient} = \frac{n(\text{the average agreement among the judges})}{1 + (n - 1)\text{the average agreement among the judges}}$$

n = number of judges

The calculation method was so that the components of the checklist were presented to four judges for judgment, then the average agreement among the judges was substituted in the above formula that finally the reliability coefficient was obtained as 93.75.

RESULTS

The main question: Up to which rate has the content of the primary school sixth grade *Social Sciences book* been developed based on the content selection index?

According to the obtained results, in response to the main question of the research and based on the average total percentage of frequency of the five content selection components (45.51), it was specified that generally the content of the *Social Sciences* book in six-grade primary school has been compiled lower than the average level based on content selection index.

Table 2: the average of frequency percentage of the content selection index in the six-grade primary school *Social Sciences* book

index	The sum of all frequency percentages	The average of all frequency percentages	The sum of all indices of the book
Content selection	227.55	45.51	1244

The main question: Up to which rate has the content of the primary school sixth grade *Social Sciences book* been developed based on the content selection index?

According to explanations that have been presented for each of indices of the checklist, it was specified that the observance of some principles in the content of the book is not considerable and they have been paid attention very little that among them we can refer to principles of validity, successiveness and continuity and it is deserved that the more attention are paid to them in the studied book.

First question: If the content of the primary school sixth grade *Social Sciences book* has been developed based on the Importance Principle?

Table 3: the table of distribution and frequency percentage of the Importance Principle index in the six-grade primary school *Social Sciences* book

Principle	Frequency and Frequency percentage	frequency	frequency percentage	The sum of the components	The entire percentage of frequency	The sum of the indices of the whole book
Importance	Statement of the necessity and importance of the subject matters	408	32.79	519	41.72	1244
	Encouragement of students to think about different issues	111	8.92			

Table 3 shows that the number of sentences and pictures in the primary school sixth grade *Social Sciences book* is 1244 that among them 519 sentences and pictures, that is, 41.27% of the total number of sentences and pictures are related to the Importance Principle. All sentences and pictures related to this main index are also related to two secondary indices including "the statement of the necessity and importance of the subjects" with frequency of 408, and frequency percentage of 32.79; and also the index of "the encouragement of the students to think about various issues" has the frequency of 111 and frequency percentage of 8.92. If we consider the average of the frequency percentage as 50, as a result we can say that in the mentioned book, the Importance Principle has been considered less than average level.

Second question: If the content of the primary school sixth grade *Social Sciences book* has been developed based on the Validity Principle?

Table 4: the table of distribution and frequency percentage of the Validity Principle index in the six-grade primary school Social Sciences book

Principle	Frequency and Frequency percentage	frequency	frequency percentage	The sum of the componen ts	The entire percentage of frequency	The sum of the indices of the whole book
	Indices					
Validity	The use of the new and up-to-date subject matters	35	2.81	203	16.31	1244
	The use of the valid and documented subject matters	168	13.50			

Table 4 shows that the number of sentences and pictures in the primary school sixth grade *Social Sciences book* is 1244 that among them 203 sentences and pictures, that is, 16.31% of the total number of sentences and pictures are related to the Validity Principle. All sentences and pictures related to this main index are also related to two secondary indices including “the use of the new and up-to-date subject matters” with frequency of 35, and frequency percentage of 2.81; and also the index of “the use of the valid and documented subject matters” has the frequency of 168 and frequency percentage of 13.50. If we consider the average of the frequency percentage as 50, as a result we can say that in the mentioned book, the Validity Principle has been considered very little.

Third question: If the content of the primary school sixth grade *Social Sciences book* has been developed based on the Interest Principle?

Table 5: the table of distribution and frequency percentage of the Interest Principle index in the six-grade primary school Social Sciences book

Principle	Frequency and Frequency percentage	frequency	frequency percentage	The sum of the components	The entire percentage of frequency	The sum of the indices of the whole book
	Indices					
Interest	The fitness of the content with the students’ interest and needs	537	43.16	837	67.28	1244
	The use of varied and attractive pictures	121	9.72			
	The use of examples and social-cultural samples	179	14.38			

Table 5 shows that the number of sentences and pictures in the primary school sixth grade *Social Sciences book* is 1244 that among them 837 sentences and pictures, that is, 67.28% of the total number of sentences and pictures are related to the Interest Principle. All sentences and pictures related to this main index are also related to three secondary indices including “the use of the new and up-to-date subject matters” with frequency of 537, and frequency percentage of 43.16; and also the index of “the use of varied and attractive pictures” has the frequency of 121 and frequency percentage of 9.72, and the index of “the use of examples and social-cultural samples” has the frequency of 179 and frequency percentage of 14.38. If we consider the average of the frequency percentage as 50, as a result we can say that in the mentioned book, the Interest Principle has been considered at a high level.

Fourth question: If the content of the primary school sixth grade *Social Sciences book* has been developed based on the Utility Principle?

Table 6: the table of distribution and frequency percentage of the Utility Principle index in the six-grade primary school Social Sciences book

Principle	Frequency and Frequency percentage	Indices	frequency	frequency percentage	The sum of the components	The entire percentage of frequency	The sum of the indices of the whole book
Utility	Statement of the usage and benefits of the subject matters in the students' present and future life		210	16.88	210	16.88	1244

Table 6 shows that the number of sentences and pictures in the primary school sixth grade *Social Sciences book* is 1244 that the total numbers and sentences related to this main index are related to the only secondary index including "the statement of the usage and benefits of the subject matters in the students' present and future life" with frequency of 210, and frequency percentage of 16.88. If we consider the average of the frequency percentage as 50, as a result we can say that in the mentioned book, the Utility Principle has been considered very little.

Fifth question: If the content of the primary school sixth grade *Social Sciences book* has been developed based on the Ability to learn Principle?

Table 7: the table of distribution and frequency percentage of the Ability to learn index in the six-grade primary school Social Sciences book

Principle	Frequency and frequency percentage	Indices	frequency	frequency percentage	The sum of the components	The entire percentage of frequency	The sum of the indices of the whole book
Ability to learn	Clearness of sentences, idioms and words		519	41.72	10.62	85.36	1244
	Understandability according to students' mental ability		543	43.64			

Table 7 shows that the number of sentences and pictures in the primary school sixth grade *Social Sciences book* is 1244 that among them 1062 sentences and pictures, that is, 85.36% of the total number of sentences and pictures are related to the learning ability Principle. All sentences and pictures related to the this index are also related to two secondary indices including "the clearness of sentences, idioms and words" with frequency of 519, and frequency percentage of 41.72 and also "the understandability according to students' mental ability" index with frequency of 543, and frequency percentage of 43.64. If we consider the average of the frequency percentage as 50, as a result we can say that in the mentioned book, the Ability to learn Principle has been considered at high level.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

The main question of the research: Up to which rate has the content of the primary school sixth grade *Social Sciences book* been developed based on the content selection index?

According to the obtained results, and in response to the main question of the research, it was specified that generally the content of the primary school sixth grade *Social Sciences book* has been compiled less than the average based on the content selection index.

The first question: If the content of the primary school sixth grade *Social Sciences book* has been developed based on the Importance Principle?

In the results of the content analysis, the index was 41.72%, and if we consider the average as 50, we can conclude that the Important Principle has been observed near to average in the primary school sixth grade *Social Sciences book*.

In this field, Yosefi [11] concluded that in selecting the content of the third-grade high school *Sociology* book, the Importance Principle has been observed. Hajjizade [12] also concluded that in selecting the content of the Training life skills book, the Importance Principle has been observed.

Hashemian [13] also concluded that based on the opinions of the most of the respondents, in selecting the content of the Social Sciences book in first grade high school, the Important Principle has been considered.

Again in this field, Narmenji [14] concluded that in selecting the content of the *Social Sciences book*, the Importance Principle of students has been considered at the average level and the higher.

Khezrlu [15] concluded that in the content of the Social Sciences book, the Importance Principle has been considered at the average level and the higher.

In justifying the lack of incompatibility of the results of the present research with the researches done, we can say that whereas the mentioned researches have been done in the past years and so far that, the Textbook Compiling and Planning Organization has done many efforts to improve the contents of the *Social Sciences book*, thus this incompatibility seems natural.

Second question: If the content of the primary school sixth grade Social Sciences book has been developed based on the Validity Principle?

In the field of the content analysis, the index was obtained as 16.31%, and if we consider the average as 50, we can conclude that the Validity Principle has been observed much less in the primary school sixth grade *Social Sciences book*.

In this connection, Yosefi [11] concluded that in selecting the content of the third-grade high school *Sociology* book, the Validity Principle has been observed.

Hajjizade [12] also concluded that in selecting the content of the *Training life skills* book, the Validity Principle has been observed.

Hashemian [13] concluded that the most of the respondents have stated that they have not any information about the validity of the content of the *Social Sciences book* in first grade high school.

Therefore, the results of the present research are compatible with those of Yosefi [11], Hajjizade [12] and Hashemian [13].

Third question: If the content of the primary school sixth grade *Social Sciences book* has been developed based on the Interest Principle?

In the field of the content analysis, the index was obtained as 67.28%, and if we consider the average as 50, we can conclude that the Interest Principle has been observed higher than average in the primary school sixth grade *Social Sciences book*.

In this connection, Yosefi [11] concluded that in selecting the content of the third-grade high school *Sociology* book, the Interest Principle has been observed.

Hajjizade [12] also concluded that in selecting the content of the *Training life skills* book, the Interest Principle has been observed.

Hashemian [13] concluded that according to the attitudes of the most of the respondents the Interest Principle has been observed in the content analysis of the *Social Sciences book* in first grade high school.

In this field, Narmenji [14] concluded that in the content analysis of the *Social Sciences book*, the interest of students has been considered at the average level and higher.

Sadeghi Jawla [5] also concluded that in the content of the *Social Sciences book*, the interest of students has been considered at the average level and higher.

Fourth question: If the content of the primary school sixth grade *Social Sciences book* has been developed based on the Utility Principle?

In the field of the content analysis, the index was obtained as 16.88%, and if we consider the average as 50, we can conclude that the Utility Principle has been observed very little in the primary school sixth grade *Social Sciences book*.

Fifth question: If the content of the primary school sixth grade *Social Sciences book* has been developed based on the Ability to learn Principle?

In the field of the content analysis, the index was obtained as 85.36%, and if we consider the average as 50, we can conclude that the ability to learn Principle has been observed at high level in the primary school sixth grade *Social Sciences book*.

Sadeghi Jawla [5] also concluded that in the content of the *Social Sciences book*, the ability to learn Principle has been considered at a high level.

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