

Comparison of Economic Geography Contents in Turkey and Turkmenistan Geography Curriculum: Grades 10th, 11th and 12th

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Abstract

Education curricula are programs that include topics for students' academic achievement and individual development. Geography curricula cover many subjects such as physical, human, economic and environmental issues. In this study, the economic geography contents of Turkey and Turkmenistan high school geography curricula were compared in the study. Firstly, the content of 10th, 11th and 12th grades in the geography programs of both countries was investigated and evaluated. The study is qualitative in nature as it is mainly based on document analysis. Economic geography topics in geography programs according to grade levels were examined and the similarities and differences between the economic geography subjects in the geography programs of both countries were determined. In both countries, economic geography subjects are included in the 12-year compulsory education, especially after the 10th grade. Moreover, both programs include economic geography topics from a local to global scale.

Keywords: Turkey, Turkmenistan, geography curriculum, economic geography, comparative education.

Introduction

Turkey and Turkmenistan are countries speaking the same language. Relations between the two countries, which are very similar in terms of culture and beliefs, started to develop rapidly after the 1990s. Expansions have been made in various fields from trade to education.

The education systems of both Turkey and Turkmenistan have their own characteristics and historical development processes. However, after the collapse of the Soviet Union, relations between Turkey and Turkmenistan in the field of education started to develop rapidly. In this context, the establishment of the basic principles of cooperation in education between the Ministry of National Education (Millî Eğitim Bakanlığı [MEB] of the Republic of Turkey and the Ministry of Education of Turkmenistan (Türkmenistanyň Bilim Ministrliği) in February 1992 was an important step. Subsequent processes have been aimed at increasing the educational relations between the two countries (Türk, 2010). Accordingly, in November 2014, several protocols on cooperation in the field of education were signed between the governments of Turkey and Turkmenistan at the level of the Ministers of National Education (MEB, 2014). At the 3rd Meeting of the Turkish-Turkmen Council held in April 2021, studies to be carried out in the field of education and cooperation between the two countries were discussed (MEB, 2021).

Turkmenistan has made significant changes in its education system after gaining independence from the Soviet Union. For example, the country adopted the Latin alphabet instead of the Cyrillic alphabet (1993) and opened new schools and universities (Schofield, 2009; Özbay, 2019). Since the 2013-2014 academic year, 12 years of compulsory education have been introduced. Additionally, the country cooperated with the United Nations and the European Union to raise the education process to world standards. On the other hand, Turkey started 12-year compulsory education in the 2012-2013 academic year (Uslu, 2020). Since 1923, Turkey has been in close relations with the western world regarding education and many other domains.

In both countries, education is provided free of charge by the government and is administered by the Ministry of Education. The medium of instruction in educational institutions in Turkey is Turkish, while the medium of instruction for primary and secondary schools in Turkmenistan is Turkmen, although there are also Russian-language schools (Gül, 2019). Both countries made significant changes in their education programs in 2018 and particularly focused on revising the geography curriculum.

Curriculum is important because it is the element that determines the functionality of education systems, teaching methods, aims and objectives of

education, measurement and evaluation methods (Demirtaş, 2017; Doğan, 1974; Uşun, 2016). Education curricula are guides that cover the necessary topics and procedures for students' academic achievement and individual development (Gordon et al., 2019; Leask, 2015; Schofield, 2017). In this study, economic geography topics in the geography curriculum of Turkey and Turkmenistan are discussed. In this respect, a comparison of the secondary school 10th, 11th, and 12th-grade geography programs of both countries was made. Grade nine curriculum has not been included in this research because there is no significant economic geography content being followed. The similarities and differences between the education system or programs of different countries can be identified through comparative education and recommendations can be made based on the comparisons (Erdoğan, 2003). Comparative education opens the possibilities of studying systems developed via similar or different processes at a certain time in different countries (Dere & Akdeniz, 2021; Kafadar et al., 2018). Thus, comparative education facilitates the comparison of steps that different countries are planning and taking for the betterment of their education systems (Savaş, 2021).

Research Questions

The main research questions in this study are:

1. Which topics related to economic geography are included in the geography curriculum programs at the secondary education level (10th, 11th, and 12th grades) in Turkey and Turkmenistan?
2. What are the similarities and differences in the economic geography content of secondary school geography curricula in Turkey and Turkmenistan

Literature Review

Few studies have been conducted to compare the geography teaching program of Turkey and Turkmenistan. One of them is the comparison of Turkey and Turkmenistan geography curricula by Aladağ (2018). In his study, Aladağ examined the geography curricula of the two countries in terms of measurement and evaluation systems, objectives, content, learning, and teaching approaches. Though Aladağ (2018) stated the similarities and differences in the geography curricula of both countries, he did not go into the evaluation and analysis of the economic geography content.

Within the scope of comparative studies, some studies have been carried out on secondary education geography programs in Turkey and other countries. These have been generally prepared as a master's or doctoral thesis. Some of those are the studies conducted by Adil (2009), Arslan (2021), Aydemir (2022), Bolat (2019), Gevat-Ismet (2011), İnce (2014), İncedere (2013), Kaya (2008), Kılıcı (2019) and Tomal (2004). In addition, İnce and Özey (2018) compared Dutch geography textbooks with geography textbooks in Turkey.

There are also studies examining the geography curriculum of Turkey from various perspectives. In this context, Demirbaş (2011) observed the geography curriculum in terms of sustainable development, while Sözen (2018) studied the changes made in Turkey's geography curriculum. On the other hand, Buğday (2022) in his thesis, investigated the problems experienced during the implementation of the geography curriculum.

This research is significant because Turkey's secondary education geography program has not been compared with Turkmenistan's geography program in terms of economic geography content. Furthermore, a comparative study on Turkey's geography curriculum and another country's geography curriculum in terms of economic geography content has not been conducted yet. This situation shows that this study will fill an important research gap.

The main purpose of this study is to compare the contents of economic geography in the geography curriculum of Turkey and Turkmenistan. In this context, the aim is to reveal the similarities and differences in the geography curriculum of the two countries and to make evaluations about them. Thus, the purpose is to contribute to the development of the geography curriculum of both countries. The topics, themes, concepts, and phenomena of economic geography in both geography programs were taken into consideration and compared.

Methodology

Research Design

This research was limited to the 2018 secondary school geography curriculum of both countries. In accordance with the comparative education approach, this research was conducted with content analysis and a screening

model based on qualitative methods. Qualitative research is the method used for describing and analyzing non-digital documents and texts (Privitera & Delzell, 2019). The screening model is a model that tries to describe and explain a situation or phenomenon as it is (Karasar, 2014). As such, a screening model pertains to research that aims to describe a past or present situation as it is without making any changes (Köse, 2014).

Data Collection

The main elements of the data used in the study are the 2018 geography curricula of Turkey and Turkmenistan. Besides, various books, theses, articles, and journals were scanned to obtain information about the curricula and education systems of the two countries. In this context, resources published on the internet or in libraries were also used and all the obtained data were evaluated by document analysis. Document analysis is the examination of written and electronic resources that contain accurate information about a subject (Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2021).

Data Analysis

In this study, firstly, the topics in the 2018 geography curriculum of both countries were examined in terms of their content and themes and the obtained findings were compared according to their similarities and differences. In this way, the topics related to economic geography in the geography curriculum of Turkey and Turkmenistan in 2018 were investigated in detail and evaluated in terms of their meaning. As a result, it was determined that there is no significant economic geography content in the 9th grade. For this reason, the curriculum of the 9th grade was excluded, and the programs of the 10th, 11th, and 12th grades were analyzed. Content analysis is a careful, detailed and systematic examination and interpretation of a certain body of material with an effort to determine the meanings of paragraphs, phrases, sentences, themes, concepts, or words (Lune & Berg, 2017).

Findings

One fundamental difference between the geography program of Turkey and Turkmenistan is that the Turkish geography program comprises topics under four headings and each heading is further bifurcated in units with each unit having a separate theme, while there is no such approach in the Turkmenistan geography program. The unit titles in the Turkish geography program include, ‘natural

systems,’ ‘human systems,’ ‘environment and society,’ and ‘global environment.’

The content of the units in the Turkish geography program comprise a summary of topics covered in the unit in the form of a “unit description” at the beginning of the unit. Then there is the title of “achievements and explanations,” which reveals what is included in this unit and what skills will be gained by the students. In this section, all the topics and targets to be covered are included in detail. In the Turkmenistan geography curriculum, on the first pages of the program, there is a general summary of what will be taught in which class. In this respect, the geography programs of Turkmenistan and Turkey are similar in that they include a “unit description” section. However, while “achievements and explanations” in the geography curriculum in Turkey are in the form of a unit, topics in the Turkmenistan curriculum are displayed according to the grade level and the number of hours allocated to the subject are also specified. However, in both programs, there are specified targets that students should achieve. In this context, the “goals and objectives of the program” at the end of the topics as a title in the Turkmenistan program and the “achievements” section in the Turkish geography are similar.

The contents of both the Turkish and Turkmenistan geography programs are ordered from simple to difficult and from basic knowledge to detailed information. Another similarity is that both curricula are prepared with a spiral approach. Also, both programs are similar in terms of not including economic geography topics in the 9th grade of the geography program. In addition, economic geography subjects are concentrated in grades 10th, 11th, and 12th in both programs. However, Turkey’s geography curriculum runs from 9th to 12th grade, while the Turkmenistan curriculum runs from 6th to 12th grade. In this context, the geography curriculum of Turkmenistan starts with the “physical geography” lesson in the 6th grade. To better understand the geography lessons, it has a structure that enables the regular transition from “nature studies” lessons to geography lessons in primary school classes. It has also been prepared to form the basis for teaching geography lessons in the upper grades, though it includes negligible content of economic geography until the 10th grade. Table 1, provides a summary of topics as given in the Turkish and Turkmenistan geography curricula.

Table 1*Summaries of Economic Geography Topics of Turkey and Turkmenistan Geography Programs*

	Turkey	Turkmenistan
Grade 10	The spatial effects of migration in Turkey, the basic features of economic activities and the relationship between development levels of countries.	National economy of Turkmenistan, economic and human geography of Turkmenistan; sectoral structure and development of the national economy of Turkmenistan; industry of Turkmenistan; development of agriculture and transportation in Turkmenistan, characteristics and development of the social system; development of Turkmenistan's foreign economic relations.
Grade 11	Natural and human factors affecting production, distribution and consumption; The relationship between natural resources and economy in the world and in Turkey; Turkey's past policies; distribution of economic sectors in Turkey; agriculture, mines and energy resources in Turkey; industrial sector in Turkey; trade, production and marketing between countries; the role of tourism activities in the interaction between countries; the industrialization process of an industrialized country; agriculture-economy of countries according to their development; economic organizations on a regional and global scale.	Economic and Human (Social-Life) Geography of the World; natural resources and population geography; world economy; international economic relations (foreign trade, capital outflow, role of transnational companies and integration etc.).
Grade 12	The effects of the dominant type of economic activity in a region on social and cultural life; future changes in economic activities; Regional development projects and their effects in Turkey; the place of the service sector in the Turkish economy; the relationship between transportation networks and settlement and economic activities; world trade centers and their place in the global economy; historical trade routes and Turkey's position; Turkey's foreign trade and its place in world markets; Turkey's tourism potential and its place in the tourism economy.	Economy and Social Geography of the World; economic considerations in the geography of various countries of the world; the role and place of Turkmenistan in the world economy; economic issues of worldwide importance.

Economic Geography Topics in Turkey and Turkmenistan Geography Curriculum

Grade 10

As can be seen in Table 1, in the 10th grade Turkish geography curriculum, the characteristics of economic activities are discussed together with the spatial effects of migration in relation to the developmental levels of countries. In the 10th grade of the Turkmenistan geography curriculum, “Economic and Human (social) Geography of Turkmenistan” is taught and socio-economic regions of the country are included in this context. Moreover, basic knowledge of social geography and ecology is included in addition to economic geography. The conditions that are effective in the economic development of Turkmenistan, the fields of economic expertise, their growth and market relations are also covered.

In the 10th grade program in Turkey, content related to economic geography is included in the unit of “Natural Systems” and “Efficient Use of Turkey’s Lands.” The “human systems” unit, on the other hand, has been prepared for associating economic activities with migration. This unit comprises the main features of economic activities in Turkey. The subject of “social and economic evaluation of the historical course of the population in Turkey” is included in the human systems unit. 2) The main features of economic activities include, a) Primary, secondary, tertiary, quaternary and quaternary activities, b) The effects of transportation and communication on economic activities 3) Data on the proportional distribution of economic activity types and their relationship with the level of development of countries (MEB, 2022).

In Turkmenistan, in the 10th-grade program, the “Economy and Social Geography of Turkmenistan” course is taught 2 hours a week for a total of 68 hours. This program includes general economic geography and the economic geography of Turkmenistan. In this framework, the program includes the subjects of “socio-economic geography as an economic and social science” and “its connection with physical geography and other socio-economic sciences.” Regarding the economic geography of Turkmenistan, the favorable economic position of the country in Central Asia and the general characteristics of Turkmenistan’s national economy are highlighted.

In the 10th-grade geography curriculum in Turkmenistan, “the labor force resources of the population and ways of utilizing them” are included in the economic aspect of the census. Furthermore, the program covers state-level measures to create employment in Turkmenistan, the characteristics of the population in the economic sectors and labor market issues. Some topics under the general characteristics of the national economy of Turkmenistan include: Turkmenistan’s transition conditions from the national economy to market economy; establishment and development of the national economic structure; the national economy, sectors and geographical distribution of the workforce; the socio-economic situation of Turkmenistan until independence. Regarding the sectoral structure of the national economy of Turkmenistan, there are subjects such as national economic structure and sectors; features of the transition of the socio-economic system of Turkmenistan to a market economy; free economic zone; formation of market relations; Turkmenistan’s economic growth model; development of entrepreneurship in Turkmenistan; support of small and medium-sized industrial enterprises. The program also covers the state tax system and the emergence of new market relations. Achievements in the socioeconomic development of Turkmenistan include ownership of state-owned private business units; achievement of food independence in Turkmenistan; and progress in improving the financial situation of the population.

In the 10th grade curriculum of Turkmenistan, topics related to industrial production are included, for example, such as the importance of industry in the economy of Turkmenistan; the industrial sector and its spatial structure in Turkmenistan; ownership of state-owned private business units; development of entrepreneurship in Turkmenistan; and the importance of small and medium-sized enterprises. The fuel and energy title cover quantitative and qualitative assessment of fuel and energy resources; Turkmenistan’s oil and gas industry; and investments in the development of the fuel and energy field. The fuel industry heading includes segments comprising oil extraction and refining; the future of oil refinery operations; extraction, transportation and consumption of natural gas; and the role of oil and natural gas in Turkmenistan’s foreign trade structure. The electricity title covers the growth and structure of the electricity sector; types and locations of power plants; electricity consumption; and the future of solar energy use in Turkmenistan. The chemical industry heading covers Turkmenistan’s chemical raw materials for industry and their uses; sectoral and areal structure of the chemical industry; development and location characteristics of the mining and

chemical industry; major chemical industries (production of mineral fertilizers, salts, sulfur, soda, iodine, bromine); and main centers of production. In the Petro-chemical and pharmaceutical-chemical industries heading, there are topics such as chemical enterprises; the Petro-Chemistry field; cellulose- paper production; and the pharmaceutical-chemical industry. In the metalworking and mechanical industry heading, there are subjects such as possibilities of developing metallurgical production in Turkmenistan; iron smelting and metalworking plants; mechanical engineering industry; agricultural machinery and equipment repair businesses. The heading of the construction industry includes the importance of the construction sector for Turkmenistan during the years of independence; investments for the development of the construction sector (sector structure, development, raw material base); building materials industry; and the development of entrepreneurship in the construction sector.

In the Turkmenistan 10th grade geography curriculum, under the title of agro-industry, there are segments such as the role of the agro-industrial complex in the country's economy; natural and socio-economic conditions for the development of agricultural production in Turkmenistan; reforms and issues of the President of Turkmenistan to strengthen agricultural development. Under the heading of Turkmenistan's water management, there are areas such as structure and development of the aquaculture complex; rational use of water in irrigated agriculture; basic irrigation systems; economic importance of rivers and reservoirs; land reclamation; Turkmen Lake and its economic importance; cotton industry and geography; the role of cotton in the national economy; cultivation of sugar beet; horticulture, fruit growing, viticulture. The title of animal husbandry includes the economic importance of animal husbandry; natural and socio-economic conditions of livestock; state policies in livestock; cattle breeding, camel breeding, poultry breeding, horse breeding, honey beekeeping, silkworm breeding; and the development of animal husbandry in Turkmenistan. The title of the light industry includes the role of consumer goods in the country's economy; public works of the president of Turkmenistan for the development of local raw material processing industries; light industry (textiles, leather, wool, knitwear, sewing); carpet production; and the role of small and medium-sized enterprises in the production of consumer goods. The food industry title covers the role of industry in ensuring food independence in Turkmenistan; sectoral composition of the food industry (flour, meat, dairy, canning, confectionery, wine, oil production); raw material supply of

enterprises; key sectors of the food industry; and the importance of the sector in ensuring food independence for small and medium-sized enterprises.

The transportation and communication system of Turkmenistan includes the importance of transportation and communication in the country's economy; changes in the geography of the transportation system during the years of independence; and restoration of the ancient Silk Road. The geography of Turkmenistan's foreign economic relations program covers the role of foreign economic relations in the economy of Turkmenistan; the relationship of credit and money to the international economy; the "open doors" policy of the president of Turkmenistan; international tourism; attracting foreign investments in the development of Turkmenistan's economic sectors; and joint studies with foreigners in the establishment of production facilities.

Turkmenistan's geography program includes the socio-economic regions of the country. Within this framework: the regions included in the program are the west Turkmenistan Socio-Economic Region (Balkan Province), the city of Ashgabat, Ahal province (Kopetdag foothills) socio-economic region, south Turkmenistan (Murgap) socio-economic region, east Turkmenistan socio-economic region (Lebap Province), and east Turkmenistan socio-economic region (Lebap Province). There are sub-headings of the regions as natural conditions and resources of the region; the importance of the region's (oil and gas) resources; the role of the region in the economy of Turkmenistan; the socio-economic and demographic situation of the region; issues related to the use of labor resources; historical-geographical features of the emergence of the economy; sectoral and regional structure of the region; fuel and energy industry; the importance of animal husbandry in agriculture; development of new lands and agricultural development. The socio-economic internal characteristics of the region and industrial centers heading covers the structure of the industrial and non-industrial sectors of the region; issues related to the efficient use of labor resources; development and geography of the main industries of the region; textile and building materials industry; agricultural use of the land; Importance of cotton, grain, livestock, horticulture, fruit and viticulture in agriculture.

The socio-economic development of Turkmenistan program includes the place of Turkmenistan's socio-economic development in the national program for

2011-2030; the main directions of socio-economic development of Turkmenistan; accelerating economic growth and raising the living standards of the population; priorities of socio-economic development in Turkmenistan's regions; and business development for small and medium businesses.

Grade 11

Geography of Turkey 11th grade curriculum human systems unit covers the following topics: the impact of the production, distribution and consumption sectors on the Turkish economy; the relationship between natural resources and economy; Turkey's economic policies; economic sectors in Turkey; agricultural sector in Turkey; Turkey's mines, energy resources and industrial sector; the importance of natural resources in Turkey's economy; economic policies followed from the establishment of the Republic to the present day; basic concepts of agriculture, animal husbandry, forestry and fisheries in Turkey; factors affecting agricultural production in Turkey; the main agricultural products grown in Turkey; defense industry in Turkey.

The Turkish 11th grade curriculum of geography includes a global environment unit which covers trade between countries and regions as well as raw materials, production and market areas; factors affecting the formation of important raw material, production and market areas in the world; the role of tourism activities in the interaction between countries; evaluation of an industrialized country in terms of industrialization processes; agriculture-economic relations of countries with different levels of development; regional and global economic organizations; Turkey's relations with global and regional economic organizations.

The environment and society unit in 11th grade in the Turkish curriculum includes topics such as the effects of mines and energy resources on the environment; production, distribution and consumption of minerals and energy resources; use of non-renewable resources; use of non-renewable energy resources; environmental effects of natural resource use in countries with different development levels; the importance of environmental planning in the effective use of natural resources and examples from Turkey; environmental impacts of different land use practices; sustainable use of natural resources.

In the curriculum of Turkmenistan, the 11th-grade world economy and life

geography program cover subjects such as general economic and geographical features of the world; natural resources and economic development; distribution of natural resources; fuel, mining and non-mining resources; the main distribution areas of the mines; surface water resources; biological resources; the world's forest resources, reserves and locations; the decrease in forest resources and its causes. Additionally, resources in the world's oceans; ocean water energy; alternative energy sources (solar, wind energy, geothermal energy); Turkmenistan's natural resource opportunities, are included in this program.

Moreover, the international division of labor and the global economy covers subjects like the international geographical division of business areas; international specialization sectors; the concept and structure of the world economy; the main periods of the formation of the world economy; credit relations; transnational companies; globalization of the world economy; Turkmenistan's place in the world economic system; sectoral and spatial structure of the world economy; basic development models of the world economy; international economic integration (merger); and the spatial structure of the world economy.

World economic geography topic includes electrical energy; mining industry and metallurgy; mechanical engineering; forestry and woodworking industry; agriculture; animal husbandry and fishing.

Grade 12

The 12th Grade Turkish Curriculum has a Human Systems Unit which includes various topics such as the effects of the dominant type of economic activity in a region on social and cultural life; the effects of economic activities such as agriculture, industry and service on social and cultural life; future changes in economic activities. Furthermore, there are topics such as characteristics of economically functional regions; economic impacts of development projects; the relationship of the service sector with Turkey's economic development; transportation, trade and tourism sectors in Turkey; the place of world trade networks in the global economy; global trade organizations; the importance of historical trade routes for Turkey's location; silk and spice routes. Besides, the unit covers Turkey's foreign trade and its place in the world markets; Turkey's trade products; Turkey's tourism potential and assets; economic effects of Turkey's tourism policies; and the place of tourism in Turkey's economy.

In grade 12, various topics related to economic geography are included in the achievements of the global environment: regions and countries unit. This unit covers the impact of technological developments on economic growth; factors that are effective in determining the level of development of countries; the importance of innovation, entrepreneurship and digitalization in the development of countries; determining economic characteristics of developed and developing countries; development measures such as Gross National Product and Human Development Index (HDI); evaluating the regional and global relations of countries in terms of natural resource potential; economic and political effects of global powers on natural resources; the main energy transmission lines of the world and their effects on countries; the characteristics of Turkey as an energy corridor.

World Economic and Life Geography in Turkmenistan geography program in 12th grade covers the regions and countries of the world in terms of economy. In this context, the economic geography of the continents of Europe, Asia, North America, Latin America, Australia and Africa is discussed regionally. Moreover, the economic characteristics of Germany, Russia and Italy, which are among the European countries, and their economic relations with Turkmenistan are given. The economic characteristics of Turkey, India, Indonesia, Japan and the People's Republic of China in the Asian continent are also included. Furthermore, the economic characteristics of the United States of America and Canada, which are among the North American countries, and Brazil, which is one of the Latin American countries, are included. Regarding the African countries, the place of the continent in the world economy, the effect of colonialism on the economy of African countries, mining, agriculture and food supply problems are included, while only the South African Republic is examined directly with its economic characteristics as a country. Transportation system geography and foreign economic relations. In addition, with regard to Australia, the continent's economic situation and natural resources and the role of Oceania countries in the world economy are included.

The common problems of human beings in the 12th-grade program of Turkmenistan cover various economic topics such as food supply problems and ways to solve them; dimensions and causes of economic backwardness; today's increasing energy consumption and the energy crisis; and raw material supply problems. On the other hand, at the end of each unit, one of the most striking features of the Turkmenistan geography program is the inclusion of proverbs and

idioms from the book *The Source of Wisdom (Paýhas çeşmesi)* (Türkmenistanyn Bilim Ministrliги, 2018).

Results

This research was carried out to comparatively examine the economic geography subjects included in the secondary education geography programs of Turkey and Turkmenistan. In this review, the economic issues in the geography program of the two countries were discussed and their similarities and differences were revealed. In this context, according to the results of the content analysis, it is seen that the economic geography subjects in the programs of the two countries are similar in general terms. However, the geography curricula of Turkey and Turkmenistan have been prepared to reflect the unique geographical conditions, economic characteristics, and differences in the natural and human resources they have. In this sense, it was observed that the economic geography subject contents in the programs are similar in general terms, but there are differences in terms of reflecting the economic conditions of the countries.

When the geography curricula of Turkey and Turkmenistan are compared in terms of economic geography content, it is seen that the economic characteristics of Turkmenistan are given more space in the Turkmenistan curriculum. In the Turkmenistan curriculum, each of the continents is given a separate place in the distribution of economic geography topics, while in the Turkish curriculum, economic geography topics are placed thematically.

In the geography program of Turkmenistan, each region of Turkmenistan is discussed separately and economic geography features are included. On the other hand, in Turkey's geography program, a systematic approach is exhibited and economic geography features in Turkey are discussed on a sectoral basis. In this respect, Turkey includes economic geography content as a regional distribution in its geography program. On the other hand, both countries include the general characteristics of their national economies in both programs. In addition, the geography programs of both countries not only include the economic characteristics of their own countries but also include economic geography content on a global scale.

One of the features of Turkmenistan is the transition to a market economy

after gaining independence. Accordingly, the Turkmenistan program includes the issues of the country's transition from the national economy to the market economy. On the other hand, Turkey, which is already in a market economy, does not have this in its geography program.

One of the differences between the geography programs of Turkey and Turkmenistan is that similar economic geography contents are covered at significantly different grade levels. For example, Turkmenistan's economic geography features are included in the 10th-grade curriculum, while Turkey's economic geography features are more concentrated in the 12th grade.

Discussion

Geography courses are part of education in both Turkey and Turkmenistan. As both countries renew and update their geography curricula, they add new elements that are developing in the field of economics in the world to their curricula. This is the usual case (Rawling, 1992). In this respect, it is seen that both countries move towards developing economic geography topics in their geography programs and include topics related to current issues. As a matter of fact, it is important to prepare geography programs based on understanding the mutual relations of different geographical places in the world (Bennetts, 2020; Hall & Moore-Cherry, 2022). In this context, it is seen that the geography programs of Turkey and Turkmenistan aim to provide education related to the conditions in the world while addressing economic geography.

Economic geography subjects are an integral part of the geography course curriculum. In this sense, geography curricula are closely linked to globalization and economics (Butt, 2011; Mitchell, 2017). Therefore, economic issues at the global level are included in the geography programs of both countries.

Aladağ (2018), who investigated the geography programs of Turkey and Turkmenistan, determined that both programs have significant similarities in terms of content. In this respect, it was observed that similar results were achieved in our study. However, Aladağ (2018) did not address the issue in terms of economic geography and did not make suggestions or evaluations in this direction. However, in general, he determined that both curricula have some priorities on a national scale. It is seen that one of the findings of this study is similar in that both countries

include economic geography issues on a national scale.

It is important to prepare geography curricula in such a way that there is increased interpretation and analysis instead of memorization. This aspect was also underscored by İnce (2014) in his study, who while comparing Turkish and Dutch geography curricula, emphasized that in geography lessons, students should not only acquire knowledge but also develop higher-level thinking skills. Same is the case with economic geography subjects because teaching approaches that acquire rote knowledge about economic geography and do not associate with current life should not be encouraged. Similar findings were also obtained in the study conducted by Kılıcı (2019). Because, in his study, Kılıcı found that the information that is not useful in daily life for the geography course, 2018 program should be removed. On the other hand, in the study conducted by Buğday (2022) on the 10th-grade geography course curriculum, it was determined that the curriculum has appropriate features for students in terms of content. In this respect, it is possible to state that a significant part of the 10th-grade geography curriculum consists of useful content because its content is economic geography.

Conclusion and Recommendation

In conclusion, economic geography subjects have an important place in both Turkish and Turkmenistan geography curricula. Both countries include general economic issues in their geography programs as well as the economic characteristics of their own countries. In this respect, the geography programs of both countries are generally arranged in a way that include their own economic conditions. However, the classification of the programs in dealing with economic geography issues differ. In this respect, it is seen that the content of economic geography is prepared more systematically in the Turkish geography curriculum.

Both countries should continue to regularly revise their geography curricula according to the developing scientific conditions. In this context, the content regarding economic geography should be kept up-to-date. Otherwise, the programs will lose their currency due to the changing economic geography characteristics of both countries and the changing conditions in the world economy.

While developing programs for Turkmenistan geography lessons, it is suggested that the understanding of unit classifications applied in Turkey should

be reflected in the curriculum for both economic geography subjects and general geography curriculum.

The share of the economic geography subjects of the countries in the world should be increased in the Turkish geography curriculum. In this context, especially the subjects aimed at analyzing the economic development processes of economically, scientifically and technologically developed countries should be increased.

In general, during the development of both geography programs, the ability to make economic analysis from a local to global scale should be increased. The development of an understanding in this direction should be placed at the center of the programs. In this sense, both countries need to increase the elements in their geography curriculum for interpreting the geographical events that occur in the economic field at the national and international level.

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