

## **A Qualitative Examination of the Perceptions of the Eight Grade Students Regarding the Concept of Environmental Pollution<sup>#</sup>**

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**Abstract:** The purpose of this study was to determine the perceptions of the eight grade students regarding the concept of “environmental pollution” covered in the 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> grades' social studies curriculum. To this end, the metaphors produced by the students in regard to this concept and the pictures/cartoons drawn by them about it were examined. This qualitative study conducted survey model. Qualitative research techniques considered suitable for triangulation (collecting data via metaphors and document analysis) were used together. The research data were obtained from 293 eight grade students attending schools located in the central district of Karabük province in the spring semester of the 2012-2013 academic year. The data obtained from the participants were analyzed and interpreted through content analysis. The research results indicated that a great majority of the participants perceived environmental pollution as disturbing and undesirable environment. In addition, the fact that the participants produced metaphors and drew pictures/cartoons only in regard to certain elements of environment, but did not produce any metaphors and did not draw anything about other elements of environment (soil, water, flora, and fauna) implied inadequate cognitive knowledge of natural environment among the eight grade students.

**Keywords:** *Social studies, environmental pollution, concept, metaphor, perception*

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