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Social Studies Teachers' In-service Training Needs towards Project Tasks: A Comparative Case Study

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Abstract This study aims to determine in-service training needs of novice and professionally experienced social studies teachers regarding the planning, implementation and assessment processes of project tasks. The study was carried out using comparative case study from qualitative research patterns as base. Eight social studies teachers who were determined by means of extreme and deviant case sampling constitute the participants of the study. Interview method was used in data collection and collected data were analyzed with inductive content analysis approach. As a result of analysis, it was determined that social studies teachers need an in-service training that includes basic features of project based learning approach and context-based practices. In addition, it was found that teachers need to improve their knowledge and skills especially concerning 'taking student and curriculum characteristics into consideration in project processes', 'adaptation of project processes into different education environments' and 'development and usage of objective assessment tools'.

Keywords In-service Training, Need Assessment, Project Task, Social Studies Teacher

1. Introduction

Today, when students are responsible for the process of reaching knowledge themselves, an understanding that gives importance to student centered approaches, strategies, methods and techniques is adopted. In this context, in social studies curriculum, students are expected to execute their thinking skills actively engaging in the process, questioning and researching the knowledge [40]. It has been seen that project tasks are among the most effective ways that serve this purpose.

Project based learning is not only a supplementary activity that supports learning, but also a student-centered approach that involves fields such as reading, writing and math's and underlies the curriculum [7]. In project approach, it is necessary to thoroughly investigate a topic worthy of learning and researching individually or with a group work; and it is stated that projects main goal is not to find true answers to the questions but to learn more about the topic [31]. This process, which requires students to solve problems and produce creative solutions or products, calls for the utilization of knowledge and skills based upon different disciplines such as math's, sciences, Turkish, Social Studies etc. [23, 32, 46]. Therefore, it is stated that students should realize the environmental problems in an effective learning-teaching process and take active roles in project tasks in order to find different solutions to these problems [41].

When the social studies course curriculum which took effect in July as part of the Ministry of National Education's last period reforms are analyzed, it has been determined that project tasks within taking initiative and entrepreneurship competence area have gained importance. It is necessary for students, via related qualifications, to plan and implement their project tasks to put their ideas into action, to report the results they reach; and it is aimed that they gain effective presentation, individual and group study skills besides research skills [40].

When project tasks' interdisciplinary and systematic structures are taken into consideration, implementation of the activities requires a complicated and multidimensional process. In this process, as in the other parts of the curriculum, in the context of the implementation of the project tasks, school's physical and socio-economical condition and teachers' and students' characteristics may differ [36, 44, 56]. Therefore, it is stated that regional and sociocultural differences should be taken into consideration in the studies that are carried out [11]. In other words, even though common curriculum with a centralist approach are used in Turkey, teachers need to change and adapt the teaching and measurement-evaluation activities in the curriculum taking students' interests and necessities and environmental features into consideration. Nevertheless, determinations of the goals which will serve regional differences are important to implement the curriculum

with the same characteristic but not always enough [29]. In this process, teachers have great works and responsibilities. However, the results of the carried out studies show that teachers' knowledge and skills regarding the planning, implementation and assessment processes of project tasks are not in desired level and they are the fields that require improvement [3, 16, 20, 21, 23, 25, 26, 41, 50, 51, 54]. In said studies, it is determined that mostly Turkish, sciences, math's and primary teachers proficiencies regarding the planning, implementation and assessment processes of project tasks are focused on. However, project tasks are recommended among alternative assessment tools that are required to be used in all primary and middle school curriculum, this case reveals the importance of the proficiencies of social studies teachers regarding project processes.

In studies that present data regarding the training needs of social studies teachers, it is shown that teachers' cognitive knowledge levels concerning project tasks, their usage levels of project tasks and the technological tools they use in the process are analyzed [18, 28, 38]. In these studies, it is determined that teachers knowledge regarding the features of project based learning is inadequate [38] and it is suggested that reasons such as the high number of students in the classrooms and the lack of cost and time complicate project tasks [18, 28].

The results of related studies show that social studies teachers need to improve their knowledge and skills that form a basis for project processes, and need to gain an insight that aims to transfer these knowledge and skills into other education environments. In the first step of this process, it is required to analyze the training needs of the participants regarding the planning, implementation and assessment processes of project tasks with a needs assessment study in a holistic and comparative approach. In the study carried out in the light of said points, it was aimed to determine the in-service training needs of social studies teachers regarding the planning, implementation and assessment processes of project tasks. In accordance with this purpose, answers were sought to the questions below:

- What are the activities that novice and experienced social studies teachers carry out in the planning, implementation and assessment process?
- What are the problems that novice and experienced social studies teachers face in the planning, implementation and assessment process?
- How are the efficacy perceptions of novice and experienced social studies teachers regarding the planning, implementation and assessment process?
- What are the suggestions of novice and experienced social studies teachers for the improvement of the process?

It was thought that the results acquired from the study would lead the way in the planning of comprehensive in-service training activities that aim to improve the planning, implementation and assessment processes of project tasks of social studies teachers.

2. Method

2.1. Research Model

Research is carried out using comparative case study from qualitative research patterns as base. With case studies, it is aimed to examine an event, a case or a curriculum deeply and multi-dimensionally, and carry out an evaluation regarding the available case in that context [47, 55]. Within the case, it is possible to analyze an individual case or the analysis of the comparison of a few cases [8].

This study aims to comparatively analyze the activities that novice or professionally experienced social studies teachers have carried out in the processes of the planning, implementation and assessment of project tasks, and by this means evaluate the fields that need in-service training in terms of different dimensions. Because of stated reasons, comparative case study was preferred in this research.

2.2. Case: Planning, Implementation and Assessment Processes of Project Tasks

The activities that novice or professionally experienced social studies teachers have carried out in the process of planning, implementation and assessment of project tasks form the cases that are identified in the research. Project tasks take place between alternative assessment methods that are used in the social studies course curriculum in terms of both formative and summative [40]. According to the Ministry of National Education Regulation on Primary and Pre-school Education Institutions [49], students are required to prepare at least one individual or group project within the academic year, submit the project before the deadline the teacher determines and the project is needed to be evaluated in the period it is assigned. In this process, teachers are required to guide the students in a field or topic they want to research and produce new knowledge, and assess their projects according to rubric. Furthermore, they are required to announce assessment results to students within 10 workdays starting from the submission date and return the assessed projects to students.

Explanations and principles stated above show that, in order for the projects to be effectively carried out, teachers should consider a number of principles not only in the implementation process but also in the planning and assessment of the process. In this context, activities that novice and professionally experienced teachers have carried out in the planning, implementation and assessment processes of projects have formed the units of analysis in

the research. Through these activities, the problems that teachers have faced in the process, their efficacy perceptions regarding the process and the suggestions they have made to improve the process were determined and their in-service training needs were presented.

2.3. Participants

The Eight social studies teachers who were determined by means of extreme and deviant case sampling [42] constitute the participants of the research. Personal information about the participants is presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Personal Information about the Participants

Features		Participants
Professional Experience	1 year	T3, T4, T5, T8
	10 year or above	T1,T2,T6,T7
Socio-economic level of the school	Low	T4, T6, T8
	Middle	T1, T2, T3, T5, T7
Sex	Female	T1, T7, T8
	Male	T2, T3, T4, T5, T6
Education level	Undergraduate	T1, T2, T3, T4, T5, T6, T7, T8
Participation in in-service training	Yes	T7
	No	T1, T2, T3, T4, T5, T6, T8
Average classroom size	10-25	T4, T5, T6, T8
	30-40	T1, T2, T3, T7

When Table 1 is examined, it is seen that four of the participants are novice social studies teachers with one year of experience, and other four have 10 year or above professional experience. While five of the participants work in middle schools that have middle socio-economic levels, three work in schools that have low socio-economic levels. All the participants are undergraduates and none have participated in an in-service training regarding project tasks except one. It is seen that the average classroom sizes vary between 10-25 and 30-40, and social studies teachers that teach at low socio-economic level schools have classes with less number of students.

2.4. Data Collection

Interview method was employed to collect the research data and in this context a semi-structured interview form prepared by researchers were used. In the process of the preparation of the interview form, opinions of three experts who were experienced in qualitative research and who work on the improvement of social studies curriculum were asked. In this context, additions were made to the personal information questions, and the necessary changes were done to make the structure of one question more understandable.

In the first part of the interview form, questions aimed at the determination of the personal information of the participants took place. After these questions, questions that aim to determine the views of participants towards the project tasks recommended to be used in social studies curriculum and the qualifications that project tasks need to have taken place. Following, questions that aim to determine the participants' efficacy perceptions regarding the process, problems they face during the process and their suggestions to improve the process in terms of the planning, implementation and assessment processes were used.

2.5. Data Analysis

In the analysis of the data, inductive content analysis [42] was used. In the analysis process, firstly codes and categories that explain the problems the participants faced in the process that describe the current situation, their efficacy perceptions regarding the process and their suggestions were determined. Afterwards, by establishing a connection between the categories, models that show the relationship between implemented activities and the problems faced during the process, and that explain the efficacy perceptions regarding the process and suggestions concerning the improvement of the process were formed. In the last part, reached codes and categories were compared after being analyzed in terms of the views of novice and professionally experienced teachers.

A peer debriefing [24, 39] was taken within the context of trustworthiness strategies; in this context, appropriateness between raw data texts and category and subcategories were examined and analyzed by an expert who were experienced in the research subject and whose opinions were asked during the process of preparation of interview forms. In addition to this, collected data have been supported by direct quotations. In this context, codes such as T1, T2 were used for teachers, and page numbers in the quotations' raw data texts are given at the end of each quotation.

3. Results

Planning Process of Project Tasks

Codes and categories that explain the activities social studies teachers carried out in the planning process of project tasks and the problems they faced in the process were presented in Figure 1.

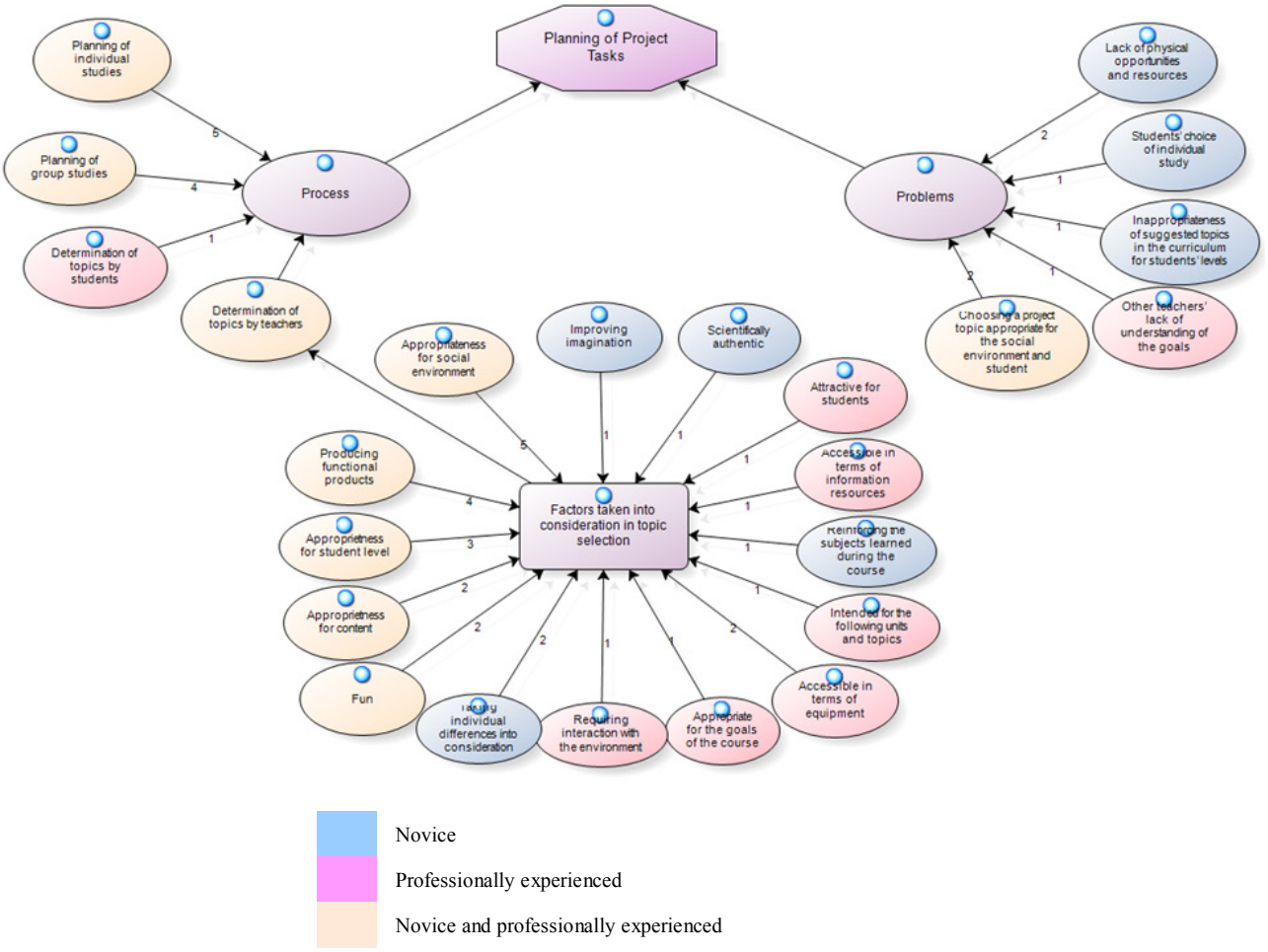

Figure 1. Planning process of project tasks

When categories and codes in Figure 1 were examined, it was seen that teachers chose the topics while planning project tasks and plan individual and group studies. It was determined that almost all the teachers choose the project topics themselves. Only one of the professionally experienced teachers mentioned that students choose the project topic. When the criterion they consider in topic selection was examined, it was seen that they mostly choose topics that were appropriate for the social environment, student level and content, that produce functional products and fun. While professionally experienced teachers prefer topics that engage students, were accessible in terms of information sources and equipment, that were intended for the following units and topics and that require interaction with the environment; novice teachers preferred topics that improve imagination, that were scientifically authentic, that reinforce the topics learned in the course and that take individual differences into consideration. Only one professionally experienced teacher stated that he had chosen a project topic appropriate for the goals of the course. That teacher also mentioned topics appropriate for the social environment and fun, and said:

> *In fact, the answer is not simple. What I can recommend is filming for History topics, I have tried that for two years and the outcomes were amazing. Fun and amusing, they have filmed the conquest of İstanbul and Troy… First of all, the situation of the student, then the goals of the social studies subject both are important (T7, s.2-3).*

When problems faced in the process were examined, it was seen that all teachers had difficulties choosing an appropriate project topic for social environment and student. It was determined that novice teachers had difficulties because of the lack of physical opportunities and resources, students' choosing individual study, and inappropriateness of suggested topics in the curriculum for students' levels. Besides, one of the professionally experienced teachers stated that the fact that other teachers couldn't comprehend the goals of the project complicates the process. Teacher's views were as such:

> *Today, many teachers assign project tasks as term papers in an old fashioned manner, and they assess the works randomly. In my opinion, it would be much better if we teach the student what project means and*

teach him how to prepare it within a process (T1, s. 3).

One of the novice teachers stated that he had difficulties with choosing an appropriate topic and because of the lack of physical opportunities:

As I mentioned before: the physical situation of the village and financial situation of the students. For example, creating an effective Facebook page and using it. I couldn't assign this task because of the lack of possibilities. Or the task of making a relief map. It requires long work and it's not suitable for the student (T5, s.2).

Implementation and Monitoring Process of the Project Tasks

Codes that describe social studies teachers' activities they put into action in the process of implementation and monitoring of project tasks and the problems they faced in the process were presented in Figure 2.

When Figure 2 was examined, it was seen that teachers interviewed with students and gave them feedback while implementing the process, explain the steps of creating of product to the students and guide them about the information resources. One of the experienced teachers mentioned that he guided one of his students to research. One of the novice teachers explained the feedback he had given to one of his students as such:

We exchange information periodically. We go over the questions of how it began, in which step they are in, whether there is a missing or wrong point in their understanding (T3, s. 2).

It was determined that problems faced during the process were mostly expressed by professionally experienced teachers. One of these teachers stated that he had insufficient time while monitoring the process:

It is hard to monitor it effectively… Of course, you need extra time to implement the process, assign project task, and check the work. I believe that teachers don't have enough time for these matters and I can't spare enough time myself, too (T2, s. 2-3).

One of the novice teachers stated that he had difficulties while integrating the projects with the curriculum.

Projects aren't seen as a teaching activity by both teachers and students. Some changes about the outcomes of the 5th graders have been made in the curriculum. Especially the outcomes in the some units were above the level of 5th graders in the available curriculum (T8, s.1).

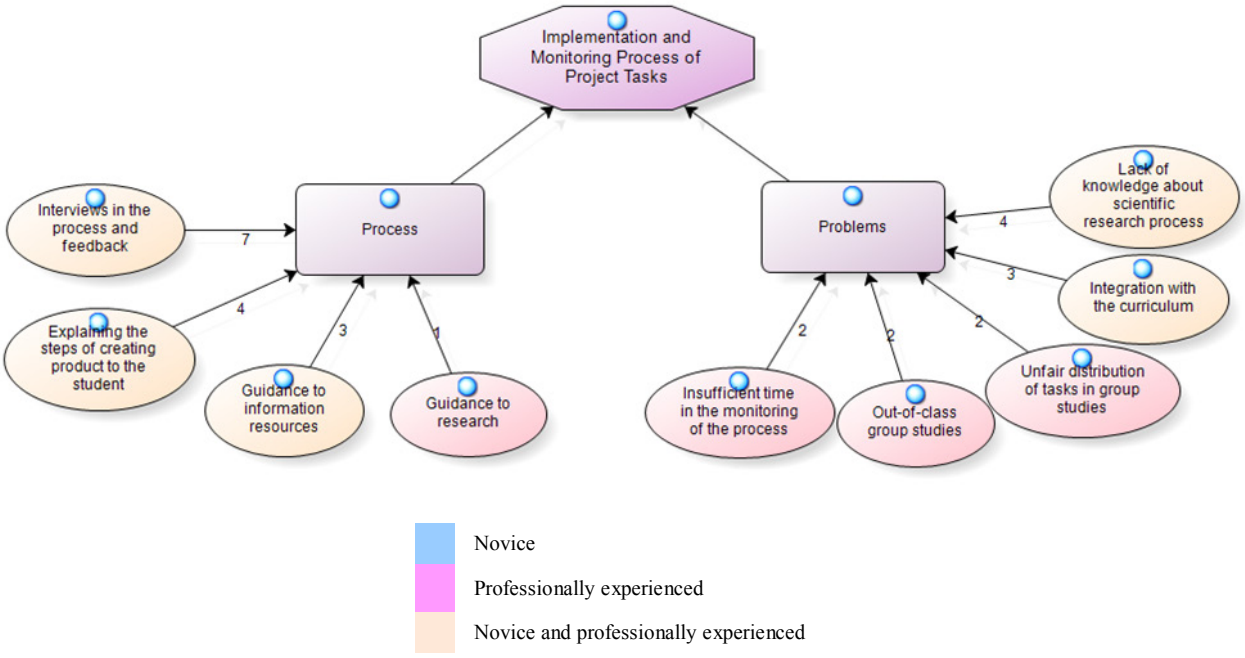

Figure 2. Implementation and monitoring process of project tasks

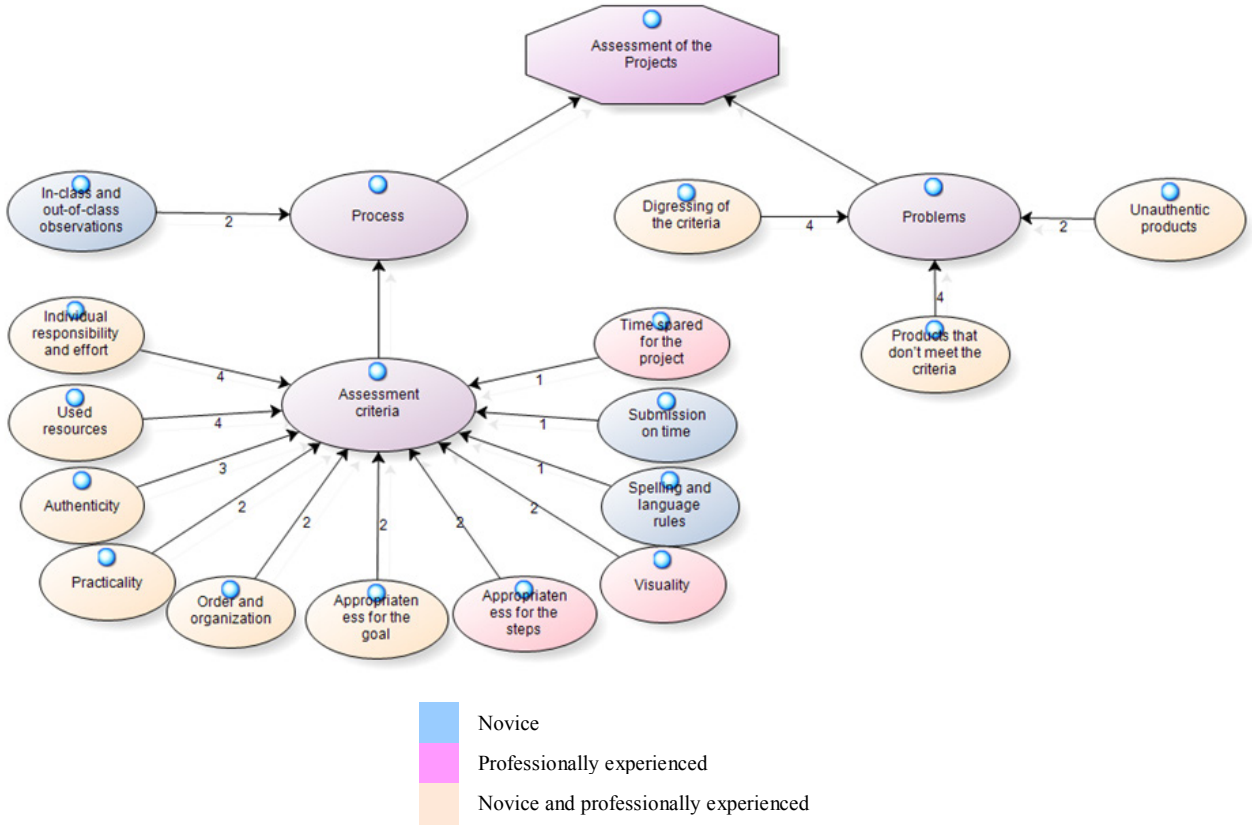

Figure 3. Process of assessment of project tasks

Assessment Process of the Project Tasks

Codes and categories that explain the activities social studies teachers carried out in the process of assessment of project tasks and the problems they faced in the process were presented in Figure 3.

When Figure 3 was examined, it was seen that all the teachers use a number of criteria in the assessment process, and novice teachers also made use of in-class and out-of-class observations additionally. It was determined that while assessing project tasks, mostly individual responsibility and effort, used resources, authenticity, practicality, organization and appropriateness for the goals were taken into consideration. While some professionally experienced teachers also stated that they also cared for the time spared for the project, appropriateness for the steps and visualization, some novice teachers said submission on time; spelling and language rules were also important criteria. One of those teachers mentioned that he made use of his observation and expressed the criteria he used in the process as such:

> *I assess according to project assessment criteria. I also take my personal observation about the process into consideration… There are a number of titles such as submission on time, usage of bibliography, appropriateness of project task to the content, language and spelling rules (T3, s. 3).*

It was seen that problems faced in the process were common for all teachers. In this context, teachers stated that they digress from the criteria, and had difficulties because of products that didn't meet the criteria or unauthentic. One of the professionally experienced teachers expressed how he assessed digressing from the criteria as such:

> *We use some criteria but I don't think it is very unbiased. We assess according to students' performances in the lesson. In fact, the criteria should also be assigned while assigning the project… I feel like, for me, my own criteria are more important than the criteria (T6, s. 6).*

Efficacy Perceptions Regarding the Planning, Implementation and Assessment Processes

When social studies teachers were asked about how perceive themselves in the processes of planning, implementation and assessment of project tasks, they expressed themselves as in efficient, partly efficient or efficient. When these views were examined in terms of the processes of project tasks, most of the participants perceive themselves partly efficient (f:4) or efficient (f:2) in the planning of project tasks. In this context, it was determined that efficacy perceptions in the planning process were higher compared to implementation and assessment processes. The reasons that form the basis of participants' efficacy or inefficacy perceptions were shown in Figure 4.

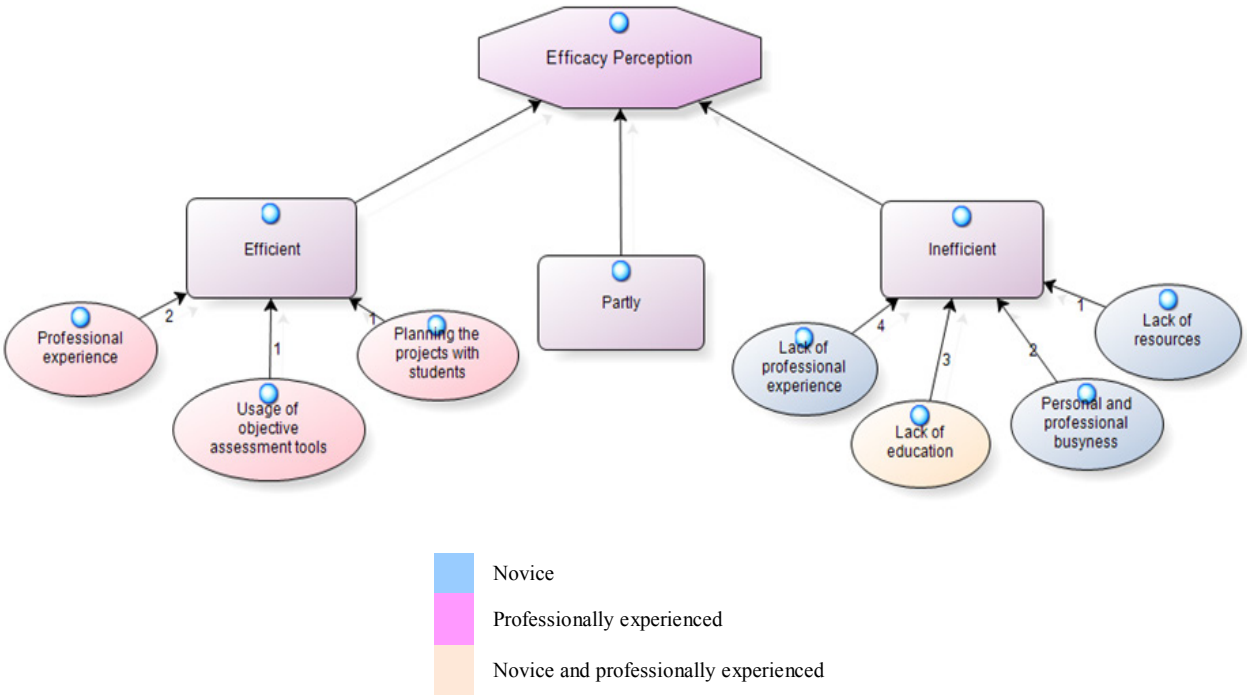

Figure 4. Efficacy perceptions regarding the planning, implementation and assessment processes of the projects

As seen in Figure 4, professionally experienced teachers perceive themselves more efficient compared to novice teachers. In terms of the reasons of efficacy perception, participants mentioned their usage of objective assessment tools, their planning projects with students and their professional experience. Accordingly, activities regarding the process and experience gained in this regard were among the main reasons that form the efficacy perception. One of the participants who mentioned the importance of professional experience and activities carried out in the process expressed his view as such:

> *I start out with years of experience. I start out from how previous experiences occurred, how I made the distribution and how I got feedback from the students… I feel really good in this matter because I pay great attention to being able to be fair… Without paying attention to the name, I can assess what takes place in the project according to the criteria; it's not a big deal for me (T1, s. 2-4).*

When the reasons of insufficiencies concerning the process were examined, it was seen that professional experience being in the first place, personal-professional busyness and lack of resources were among the stated reasons for novice teachers. A professionally experienced teacher stated that he didn't see himself fully efficient because of lack of education. The view of one of the teachers who perceive himself inefficient because of lack of professional experience and lack of resources was as such:

> *Efficacy partly depends on time and location. In the current time and place that I'm in, I see myself inefficient (T4, s.2).*

Suggestions for the Improvement of the Process

Codes and categories that explain the suggestions of social studies teachers for the improvement of the project process were presented in Figure 5.

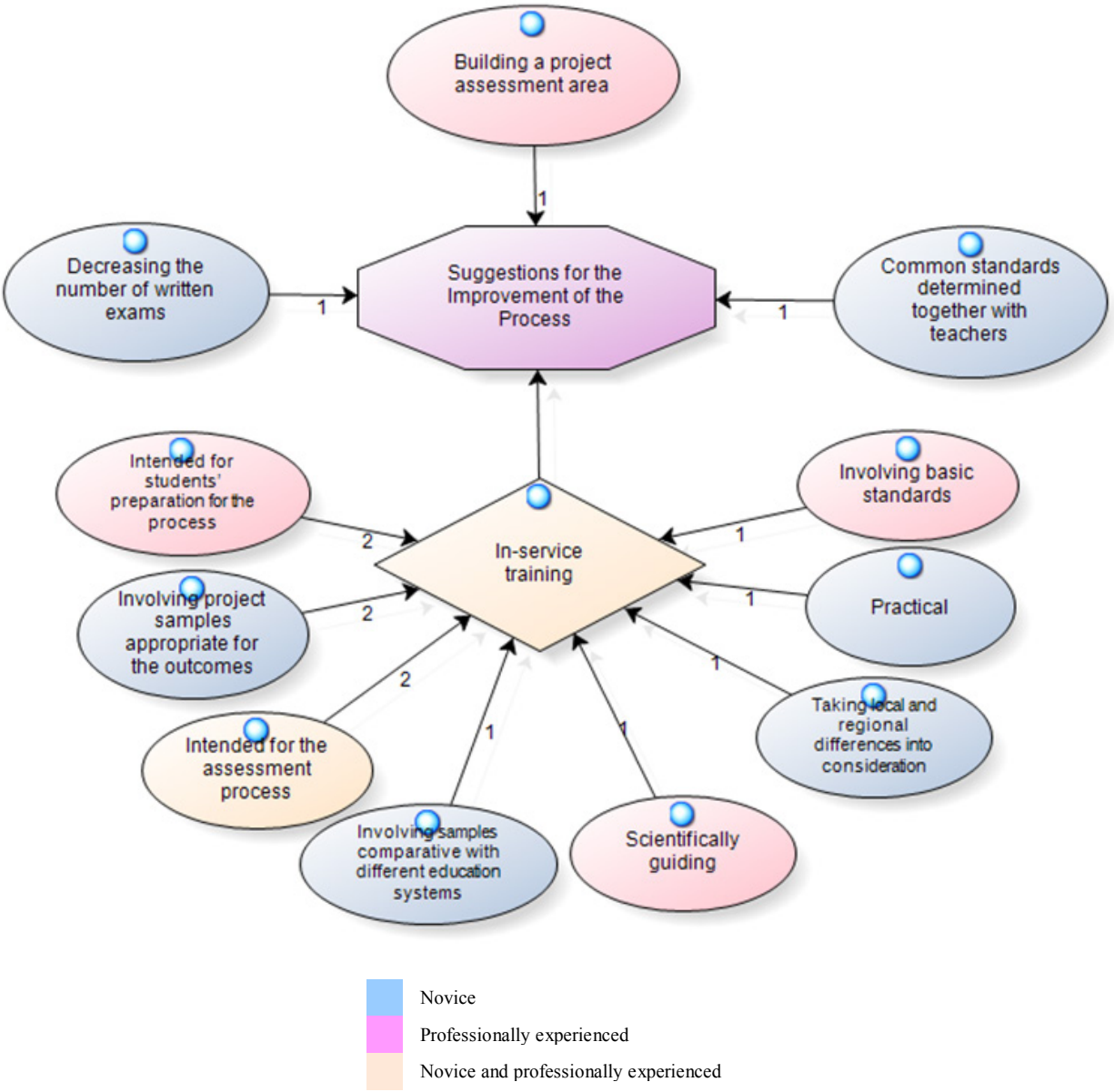

Figure 5. Suggestions for the improvement of the process

When Figure 5 was examined, it was seen that participants suggest structural regulations such as building a project assessment area in schools, decreasing the number of written exams and determining common standards together with teachers. Nonetheless, it was determined that all of the participants were in need of in-service training. Professionally experienced teachers stated that this training should be in a structure that prepares students for the process, scientifically guides and involves basic standards. It was determined that novice teachers were in need of a training that involves samples which compare different education systems with project samples appropriate for the outcomes, that takes local and regional differences into consideration and that is practical. As for the suggestion that was common for both groups, it was stated that this training should have been intended for the assessment of projects. One of the experienced teachers stated that students needed a training intended for their preparation for the process and expressed the reasons of this situation as such:

> *Firstly, it is necessary to raise the awareness of the student. It is vital to explain him the steps of scientific research and why it is necessary to use resources. He needs to understand that this is a necessity… We inspire the student not to take the homework if he fails at it and thinks that he can't do it (T2, s. 2-4).*

One of the novice teachers stated that he needed a practical training that takes local and regional differences into consideration and expressed his view on the topic as such:

I would want the given training to be practical. Training should be in a more local structure. It should be based on local resources. It is easier to complete the project in big cities with bigger resources. However, teachers who serve in the countryside, such as myself, don't have the conditions or possibilities to apply what we have learned. Because of that, we try to teach the topics lowering their level and adapting them locally (T4, s.3).

4. Discussion, Conclusions and Implications

When the findings obtained from the research have been examined in terms of the steps of the project process, it has been determined that both novice and professionally experienced teachers have taken active roles in the selection of the project topics. It has been seen that teachers mostly choose topics that were appropriate for social environment, student level and content, that present practical products, that were accessible in terms of equipment and that were fun. Only one of the professionally experienced teachers stated that he took the course goals into consideration while determining the project topics. This situation has showed that while choosing project topics, participants act independent from the goals and learning outcomes of the course.

Larmer ve Mergendoller [35] stated that project tasks should be planned in a manner that attracts the attention of the student that gives the student the chance to work on a topic which he wants to learn in more detail. In this process, students are asked to take active roles and use their higher order thinking skills in all steps from the selection of project topics to the determination of assessment criteria [9, 23, 31, 32, 34, 41, 46]. At the same time, in order for project processes to be implemented effectively, process should be monitored within criteria and improved. With mentioned criteria, it is seen that goals or outcomes that involve knowledge, skill and values that students aim to acquire are emphasized [10]. An education process without goals shows that there is not a based criterion in the selection of assessment tools, and it is stated that, in this situation, it is not possible to sustain a continuous development of the curriculum [52]. For this reason, the fact that participants don't mention the goals among the criteria they have taken into consideration while choosing project topics is seen as an important deficiency. This situation also shows that the participants have difficulties about integrating project processes with the curriculum. The fact that participants see project topics suggested in the curriculum as inappropriate for the students' level and mention they have difficulties integrating the process with the curriculum as problems among the ones they faced in the process support this view.

When obtained findings and the essentials of project based learning method have been compared, it has been seen that it is necessary to improve current knowledge and skills of teachers regarding the planning process. In this process, it is thought that teachers need to gain an understanding that ensures them to take the goals into consideration and share the responsibility with the students.

When other factors taken into consideration while selecting project topics are examined, it is determined that novice teachers mostly prefer topics that take individual differences into consideration and that improve imagination. As for professionally experienced teachers, they mostly focus on the accessibility of the topic content, information resources, and necessary tools. This situation might result from the fact that novice teachers adopt a more student-centered approach. The fact that the studies of Maden, Durukan and Akbaş [37] have determined that teachers with 1-10 years of experience have a more student-centered approach compared to teachers with 11-15 years of experience supports this view. When other problems faced in the planning of project tasks are examined, it has been determined that all teachers have difficulties about finding appropriate topic for social environment and students. In addition to this, it has been determined that novice teachers have problems regarding the lack of physical opportunities and resources. It has been seen that, these obtained findings are of similar nature with other researches that are about alternative assessment tools. In said studies, it has been determined that the lack of physical opportunities and equipment are among basic problems faced in the implementation of alternative measurement-evaluation practices [1, 2, 4, 5, 12, 13, 18, 28, 30, 45, 53]. However, one of the points that need to be discussed here is the adaptation problems that teachers experience among current conditions and project processes. Because in the implementation of curriculum prepared in a centralist approach, teachers need to take local and regional necessities into consideration [11]. In this context, teachers are expected to revise the activities in the curriculum taking student characteristics and environmental factors into consideration [36, 44, 56]. While these physical problems experienced during the process require a number of regulations regarding the improvement of physical opportunities, they show that there are some fields teachers need to improve concerning the adaptation of project processes to current conditions.

In another extent of the obtained findings, it is determined that both novice and professionally experienced teachers give regular feedback to the students and guide them through information resources through the implementation and monitoring of the process. In these activities that teachers carry out, it is seen that they take key features regarding the implementation of the project processes into consideration, because it is stated that the

feedback given in the project processes is vitally important in guiding the students effectively [9, 33, 35, 49]. In addition to this, half of the teachers mentioned the lack of knowledge regarding scientific research process, and it has been determined that professionally experienced teachers had insufficient time concerning the monitoring of the process. When related researches have been examined, it has been seen that teachers lack of knowledge, skill and experience regarding alternative assessment tools and they have difficulties in time management [1, 2, 3, 16, 21, 22, 23, 41, 48, 50, 51].

In the assessment of project tasks, it was determined that while professionally experienced teachers take the time assigned for the project, appropriateness for the steps and visualization into consideration, novice teachers' pay more attention to criteria such as submission on time, language and spelling rules. At this point, it can be said that professionally experienced teachers mostly focus on criteria that takes the process into consideration, and novice teachers concentrate on criteria regarding the qualifications of the created product and the finalization of the process. It has been determined that other problems experienced in the process are common by the teachers. In this context, teachers stated that they digressed from the criteria and had difficulties because of products that don't meet the criteria and that are not authentic. Results of the study carried out by Arı [2] show that similar results have been faced in the assessment process and support the obtained findings.

When teachers' efficacy perceptions regarding the process are examined, it has been determined that the participants perceive themselves as partly efficient. In addition to this, it has been determined that participants' efficacy perceptions regarding the planning process are higher compared to implementation and assessment processes. The fact that participants' perceptions regarding the planning process are high draws attention. Because the problems they have faced in the process show that their current knowledge and skills need to be improved. This situation may have resulted from the fact that participants' perceptions regarding their personal and general teaching efficacies are different. While personal teaching efficacy is related to internal factors that affect teaching behavior, general teaching efficacy is explained as teachers' perceptions regarding their ability to deal with external factors regarding teaching [19]. In this sense, the fact that teachers' efficacy perceptions regarding planning process are higher may have resulted from the fact that they associate the problems they have faced in the process with mostly external factors such as environmental factors and the lack of physical opportunities. As Raudenbush, Rowan and Cheong [43] stated, the fact that teachers' efficacy perceptions are positive is necessary to improve teaching, but not enough on its own. It is stated that, teachers' efficacy perceptions regarding the implementation of their current knowledge and skills on teaching is important in an effective teaching process. In this context, it is thought that teachers emphasize their general teaching efficacies for the planning process, and their perceptions regarding personal teaching efficacies don't entirely reflect their current knowledge and skills.

It is determined, within the context of study, that professionally experienced teachers perceive themselves more efficient in planning, implementation and assessment of project tasks compared to novice teachers, and see professional experience they have as the main reason that constitute efficacy perception. Bandura [6] stated that successful experiences that an individual has lived are between main reasons that direct efficacy perception. Nevertheless, the fact that different studies [14, 15, 17, 27] determined that professional experience has crucial impact on efficacy perception regarding implementation process supports the emphasis that participants make on experience. It has been determined that, on the fact that participants view themselves as in efficient, lack of training has a vital effect. Even though alternative assessment tools have been being used in middle school curriculums in Turkey for over 10 years, it is seen that teachers' training needs regarding the process still continue. It is known, in this process, that novice teachers go through a candidateship process and different in-service training activities are being held. However, almost all of the participants stated that they haven't taken part in a training that is directly aimed at project tasks. These views of the participants show the need for a set of regulations to improve the quality of implemented or planned in-service training activities. As Önen et al. [41] stated, it is considered that in-service training practices should be given by field experts and trainings should involve practices based on schools more than only theoretical knowledge and should be supported by regular feedbacks. The fact that participants have suggested practical studies that take local and regional differences into consideration besides theoretical knowledge supports this view.

In conclusion, in the study, it has been determined that social studies teachers regard themselves as partly efficient concerning planning, implementation and assessment processes of project tasks. Also it has been revealed that teachers' efficacy perceptions regarding the planning process are higher compared to implementation and assessment processes. However, it has been concluded that they have difficulties in taking student views into consideration, assessing products according to criteria, topic selection appropriate for social environment, student level and learning outcomes in this process.

These results were limited to the data collected from eight social studies teachers and demonstrate that teachers need an in-service training that includes basic features of project based learning approach and context-based practices. Through this training, it is thought that teachers' knowledge and skills especially regarding 'taking student

and curriculum characteristics into consideration in project processes', 'adapting project processes into different education environments' and 'improvement and usage of objective assessment tools' should be improved.

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