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Examining the Relationship Between Preservice Teachers' Interest in Various Disciplinary Areas of Social Studies and Their Planned Teaching Effort for These Disciplines' Topics

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Introduction

Social studies promotes civic competence by equipping students with the knowledge, values, beliefs, attitudes, and skills needed in a democratic society (Allen & Stevens, 1998; National Council for the Social Studies [NCSS], 1994). However, the multidisciplinary characteristics of civic issues entail an integrated curriculum covering different aspects of human social behavior (Naylor & Diem, 1987; NCSS, 1994). Therefore, social studies draws its content mostly from various social sciences such as anthropology, economics, geography, history, political science, sociology, and so forth (Martorellla, 1998; NCSS, 1994; Turkish Ministry of National Education [MoNE/MEB], 2018; Turner, 2004), which makes it "the most inclusive of all school subjects" (Ross, 2001, p. 19). This study investigated the interest of preservice teachers in the core social science disciplines covered in the social studies curriculum; namely, economics, geography, history, political science, and sociology (Maxim, 2006; MoNE/MEB, 2018; Turner, 2004) and preservice teachers' planned teaching efforts for social studies topics associated with these disciplines.

Problem Statement

The current social studies curriculum in Turkey consists of seven learning themes: 1. Individual and society, 2. Culture and heritage, 3. People, places and environments, 4. Science, technology and society, 5. Production, distribution and consumption, 6. Effective citizenship, and 7. Global connections (MoNE/MEB, 2018). The curriculum states that the theme of the individual and society focuses on psychology, sociology, and social psychology; that of culture and heritage on history; the theme of people, places and environments on geography; and the theme of production, distribution and consumption focuses on economics (MoNE/MEB, 2018, p. 11–12). Although no related social science discipline is stated explicitly for the themes of science, technology, and society and global connections, it is clear from the explanations and objectives

of these themes (MoNE/MEB, 2018) that the first theme is related to sociology and history, while the latter relates to geography, sociology, political science, and anthropology.

Hence, the social studies curriculum is based on a variety of social sciences (MoNE/MEB, 2018). Although the multidisciplinary structure of the social studies curriculum (NCSS, 1994) provides some advantages, such as meaningful learning (Güngördü, 2002; Ornstein & Hunkins, 1998), it can cause undesirable consequences in that the teachers may not be equally interested in all social science disciplines that constitute the social studies curriculum (Akpınar & Ayvacı, 2003; Demircioğlu, 2006). For instance, Akpınar and Ayvacı (2003) examined preservice social studies teachers' interest in social sciences. They found that almost half the teachers indicated that they had been interested in history and geography before starting their education at university. It was also found that these preservice teachers mostly followed history-related publications. Moreover, given a choice of one social science discipline, most (61%) indicated they would choose history whereas about one-fourth (24%) would choose geography (Akpınar & Ayvacı, 2003). Demircioğlu (2006) found that the most interesting social sciences for preservice social studies teachers were history, geography, philosophy, sociology, anthropology, economics, archeology, and political science, respectively.

As a result, unequal interests of preservice teachers in social science disciplines (Akpınar & Ayvacı, 2003; Demircioğlu, 2006) might result in less effort in teaching the content of less-interested disciplines (Akpınar & Ayvacı, 2003; Cin, 2007; Eren, 2012; Jarrett, 1999; Kadıoğlu, 2008; Kunter, Frenzel, Nagy, Baumert, & Pekrun, 2011; Kunter et al., 2008; Long & Woolfolk Hoy, 2006; Schiefele & Schaffner, 2015; Schiefele, Streblow, & Retelsdorf, 2013). However, no research has been found comparing preservice teacher interest in core social science disciplines and its relation with planned teaching effort for social studies topics associated with these disciplines.

Therefore, the purpose of this study is to examine the relationship between preservice elementary school teachers' and preservice social studies teachers' interest in economics, geography, history, political science, and sociology and their planned teaching effort for topics related to these disciplines in social studies.

The following research questions guide this study:

1. Does preservice elementary school and preservice social studies teachers' interest in the disciplines of economics, geography, history, political science, and sociology vary significantly?
2. Do preservice elementary school and preservice social studies teachers' planned teaching efforts for social studies topics related to economics, geography, history, political science, and sociology vary significantly?
3. Can preservice elementary school and preservice social studies teacher interest in economics, geography, history, political science, and sociology predict their planned teaching efforts for social studies topics related to these disciplines?

Review of Relevant Literature

Interest in Education

Although a large and growing body of literature on scientifically studied interest has accumulated, starting from the 1980s, scholarly examination dates back to the early 1900s (Renninger & Hidi, 2011). In this sense, John Dewey's *Interest and Effort in Education* (Dewey, 1913) became a very influential work in interest research in the field of teaching and learning that emerged in the following years (Lynch, 2017; Schiefele, 1991).

Interest can be defined as "a strong regard or predisposition for a particular object or activity when an individual is afforded the freedom of choice" (Lynch, 2017, p. 209). Interest has affective, cognitive, and motivational components and also features such as being content-specific, a driving force to re-engage with content, objects, ideas, and activity, etc., and is changeable over time (Ainley, 2006; Hidi & Renninger, 2006; Krapp, 1999; Renninger, 2009; Renninger & Hidi, 2011; Schiefele, 1991).

The literature on educational research differentiates two main types of interest: Situational interest and Individual (or personal) interest (Hidi, 2006; Hidi & Harackiewicz, 2000; Hidi & Renninger, 2006; Lynch, 2017; Schiefele, 1991). Situational interest is a psychological state triggered more by environmental and contextual factors and characterized by a transitory state with affective reaction, and focused and increased attention (Ainley, 2006; Harackiewicz, Smith, & Priniski, 2016; Hidi, 2006; Hidi & Harackiewicz, 2000). Therefore, for instance, unusual objects in an environment, humorous lectures, or an astounding presentation could all cause situational interest (Dan, Wei, & Zhao, 2013; Harackiewicz & Hulleman, 2010). On the other hand, individual interest is characterized by "a relatively enduring predisposition to attend to objects, events, ideas, etc., and to reengage with particular content" (Hidi, 2006, p. 72). Individual interest develops slowly and over time, but when developed it is relatively more stable (Harackiewicz et al., 2016; Hidi, 2006; Hidi & Harackiewicz, 2000; Schiefele et al., 2013). Students may have an individual interest in school subjects such as history, geography, social studies, mathematics, etc. that causes them to want to find ways to learn more about these subjects, to develop positive attitudes towards them, and to value them more highly (Ainley, Hidi, & Berndorff, 2002; Hidi, 2006). In contrast to situational interest, observed for example when the topic in a class is presented in an entertaining way, some students might have individual interest in the same topic regardless of how the lecture is presented (Harackiewicz et al., 2016).

As is seen, these two types of interest differ from each other in terms of emergence, development, duration, and triggering factors; however, they are not independent from each other and tend to impact one another (Hidi & Harackiewicz, 2000). For example, based on Krapp's (2002) three-stage model of interest development, Hidi and Renninger (2006) proposed a four-phase model that explains how situational interest evolves into individual interest under appropriate circumstances such as interest-triggering teaching methods and the learning environment, prior knowledge, and support from others. According to this model, a triggered situational interest (first phase) evolves into a maintained situational interest (second phase) which may then result in an emerging individual interest (third phase). Finally, an emerging individual interest becomes a well-developed individual interest (Hidi & Renninger, 2006). In

their experimental study, Rotgans and Schmidt (2017) found that the repeated arousal of situational interest directly influenced the growth of individual interest. The very recent study of Rotgans & Schmidt (2018) investigated how individual and situational interest were related to each other as well as their impact on knowledge acquisition. They found that preexisting individual interest positively predicted initial situational interest and concluded that "when students engage with a learning task for a particular school subject they always bring with them a certain degree of individual interest for that subject, which determines their starting level of situational interest" (Rotgans & Schmidt, 2018, p. 536). This finding highlights the importance of individual interest; so that even when there are not appropriate conditions to trigger situational interest, such as a monotonous class, individual interest may compensate for this undesired environment (Hidi & Harackiewicz, 2000).

Interest and Its Outcomes

Given its critical role on student outcomes, both cognitive and affective (Ainley et al., 2002; Lynch, 2017), it is not surprising to find an intense focus on interest in the fields of psychology and education and the emergence of a considerable amount of research (Hidi, 2006; Hidi & Renninger, 2006; Rotgans, 2015). As an independent variable, student interest is positively related to knowledge acquisition/achievement (Ainley et al., 2002; Corbière, Fraccaroli, Mbekou, & Perron, 2006; Dan & Todd, 2014; Dan et al., 2013; Harackiewicz & Hulleman, 2010; Harackiewicz, Barron, Tauer, & Elliot, 2002; Harackiewicz, Barron, Tauer, Carter, & Elliot, 2000; Harackiewicz et al., 2016; Hidi, 2006; Hidi & Harackiewicz, 2000; Hidi & Renninger, 2006; Rotgans, 2015; Rotgans & Schmidt, 2011, 2018; Singh, Granville, & Dika, 2002; Tella, Tella, & Adeniyi, 2009), deep learning strategies (Dan & Todd, 2014; Harackiewicz et al., 2000; Schiefele, 1991), intrinsic motivation (Dan et al., 2013; Hidi & Harackiewicz, 2000), engagement in subject matter/classroom (Harackiewicz et al., 2016; Linnenbrink-Garcia, Patall, & Messersmith, 2013; Long & Woolfolk Hoy, 2006; Rotgans, 2015), commitment to school (Harackiewicz & Hulleman, 2010), attention (Harackiewicz & Hulleman, 2010; Hidi & Renninger, 2006; Long & Woolfolk Hoy, 2006; Rotgans, 2015), how students spend their free time (Harackiewicz & Hulleman, 2010; Lynch, 2017), the subjects/courses chosen in school (Harackiewicz & Hulleman, 2010; Harackiewicz et al., 2002; Harackiewicz et al., 2000; Harackiewicz et al., 2016; Lynch, 2017), career choice (Çulha Özbaş & Doğan, 2014; Karasu Avcı, 2017; Lynch, 2017; Rotgans & Schmidt, 2018), persistence and effort (Ainley et al., 2002; Akpınar & Ayvacı, 2003; Harackiewicz & Hulleman, 2010; Hidi & Renninger, 2006; Long & Woolfolk Hoy, 2006; Schiefele, 1991; Singh et al., 2002), mastery goal orientations (Harackiewicz et al., 2002; Harackiewicz et al., 2000), enjoyment of class (Harackiewicz et al., 2002; Harackiewicz et al., 2000; Long & Woolfolk Hoy, 2006; Rotgans, 2015), major choice (Harackiewicz & Hulleman, 2010; Harackiewicz et al., 2002), locus of control (Tella et al., 2009), self-efficacy/perceived competence (Linnenbrink-Garcia et al., 2013; Rotgans, 2015; Tella et al., 2009), academic self-concept (Corbière et al., 2006), curiosity (Rotgans, 2015), performance expectations (Harackiewicz et al., 2000), and perceived performance/skills (Siegle, Rubenstein, Pollard, & Romey, 2010). On the other hand, interest is negatively correlated with surface-learning strategies (Dan & Todd, 2014; Schiefele, 1991), work avoidance goals (Harackiewicz et al., 2002; Harackiewicz et al., 2000), lack of strategy (Harackiewicz et al., 2000), and boredom (Rotgans, 2015).

Another area of interest research in education is the teachers' interest in school subjects and teaching and its outcomes (Eren, 2012; Schiefele et al., 2013). In general, teacher interest can be defined as "*individual interests* that refer to relatively permanent attractions to certain topics or domains (e.g., school subjects, specific knowledge fields)" (Schiefele & Schaffner, 2015, p. 159). However, some researchers (Kunter et al., 2011; Kunter et al., 2008) use the term *teacher enthusiasm* as an equivalent for teacher interest (Eren, 2012; Schiefele & Schaffner, 2015; Schiefele et al., 2013).

Research has shown that teacher interest or enthusiasm influences both students (Lazarides, Buchholz, & Rubach, 2018; Lazarides, Gaspard, & Dicke, 2019; Long & Woolfolk Hoy, 2006; Schiefele & Schaffner, 2015) and also the teachers' psychological state, perceptions and/or performance (Ekstam, Korhonen, Linnanmäki, & Aunio, 2017; Eren, 2012; Kunter et al., 2011; Kunter et al., 2008; Retelsdorf, Butler, Streblow, & Schiefele, 2010; Schiefele & Schaffner, 2015; Schiefele et al., 2013). For example, it was found that teacher enthusiasm for teaching, as perceived by students, positively related to students' mastery goal orientations, task values (intrinsic value, utility value, and attainment value) (Lazarides et al., 2018), and student interest in mathematics (Lazarides et al., 2019). Using quantitative as well as qualitative data, Long and Woolfolk Hoy (2006) also showed that teacher interest had a positive impact on student motivation and learning.

Ekstam et al. (2017) examined the relationship between preservice teachers' individual interest, subject knowledge in mathematics, and their efficacy beliefs in teaching mathematics. They found positive and significant correlations between individual interest and teacher efficacy beliefs and subject knowledge. In addition, they found that subject knowledge predicted individual interest; in turn, individual interest predicted teacher self-efficacy beliefs. Kunter et al. (2008) assessed teacher enthusiasm (for mathematics and for teaching mathematics) and their instructional behavior as reported by both teachers and students. They found positive and significant correlations between teacher enthusiasm (for both mathematics and teaching mathematics) and job satisfaction. They also found that while enthusiasm for mathematics predicted positively and significantly cognitive autonomy support for students, enthusiasm for teaching mathematics predicted positively and significantly monitoring, social support for students, and cognitive challenge. In another study, Kunter et al. (2011) demonstrated that both teaching and subject enthusiasm correlated positively with self-efficacy, job satisfaction, and life satisfaction; but on the other hand, correlated negatively with burnout and neuroticism.

Retelsdorf et al. (2010) examined the relationship between teachers' goal orientation for teaching, instructional practice, interest in teaching, and burnout. They found that while interest correlated negatively with work avoidance-goal orientation and burnout; it correlated positively with mastery goal orientation, mastery-oriented practice, and cognitive stimulation and autonomy. Schiefele et al. (2013) investigated the relationships between three types of teacher interest (subject interest, didactic interest, and educational interest) and teachers' self-efficacy, occupational well-being (burnout, enjoyment, flow), and instructional practices (mastery-oriented instruction, performance-oriented instruction, internal differentiation, and cognitive stimulation and autonomy). In this study, Schiefele et al. (2013) conceptualized subject interest as "interest in the subject matter taught" (p. 12), didactic interest as "a teacher's interest in teaching methods, in literature on didactics, and on how best to prepare teaching content" (p.12)

and educational interest as "interest in educational aspects or issues in the teaching profession" (p. 12). Their findings showed that the subject, didactic, and educational interests significantly and positively predicted enjoyment; didactic and educational interests significantly and positively predicted mastery-oriented practice; subject interest significantly and positively predicted flow; while didactic interest significantly and positively predicted internal differentiation and cognitive stimulation. Nevertheless, didactic and educational interests significantly and negatively predicted burnout (Schiefele et al., 2013).

Similarly, Schiefele and Schaffner (2015) demonstrated that teachers' subject, didactic, and educational interests were positively and significantly correlated with teacher mastery goals and self-efficacy. On the other hand, only didactic and educational interests were positively and significantly correlated with mastery-oriented and cognitively-activating instructional practices. They also found that student subject interest was positively and significantly correlated with teacher interest. However, only educational interest was found to be a significant predictor of student subject interest. Didactic and educational interests were also found to correlate positively and significantly with student mastery goals (Schiefele & Schaffner, 2015). In a study carried out to examine relations between preservice teacher interest in teaching, planned effort, planned persistence, professional development aspirations, leadership aspirations, and career choice satisfaction, Eren (2012) found significant and positive correlations between subject interest and other variables except for leadership aspirations. Moreover, preservice teachers with high subject interest, didactic interest, and educational interest (compared with those having medium- and low-level interest) reported more planned effort and increased persistence for their teaching, had elevated career choice satisfaction, and had higher professional development aspirations (Eren, 2012).

Research Design

This study used a correlational research design (Creswell, 2012) as it focuses on the relationship between interest in various social science disciplines and planned teaching efforts for these disciplines' topics in social studies lessons.

Participants

In Turkey, elementary and social studies teachers are responsible for teaching social studies lessons in elementary and middle schools, respectively. In this study therefore, the participants were selected from among elementary and social studies preservice teachers at the Faculty of Education of a state university in Turkey at the end of the spring term in the 2017–2018 academic year. In recruiting participants, the convenience sampling method was adopted. In this method, participants are selected based on their convenience to the researcher, willingness and availability (Creswell, 2012, p. 145–146).

A total of 222 preservice elementary school teachers (179 female, 43 male; M_{age} = 21.88, SD = 1.23) and 94 preservice social studies teachers (49 female, 45 male; M_{age} = 21.96, SD = 1.52) participated in the study. Of the preservice elementary school teachers, 108 were in their third year and 114 were in their fourth year; while 49 of the preservice social studies teachers were in their third year and 45 were in their fourth year. The data were collected from third-year students

on the Social Studies Teaching course and Special Teaching Methods I course and from fourth-year students by visiting their classrooms at appropriate times.

In addition to other courses, preservice elementary school teachers take a Social Studies Teaching course as well as School Experience in the spring term of the third year, and they take Practice Teaching I-II courses in the fourth year. Preservice social studies teachers take a Special Teaching Methods I course in the spring term of the third year. In the fourth year, they take Special Teaching Methods II, School Experience and Practice Teaching courses. The Social Studies Teaching and Special Teaching Methods I-II courses allow the preservice teachers to acquire knowledge regarding the social studies curriculum in detail. In these courses, they learn about the themes and objectives of the social studies curriculum and their relations with social science disciplines. They also gain knowledge about teaching methods and assessment and evaluation techniques in social studies. During the School Experience courses, preservice teachers make observations in real classrooms, while in the Practice Teaching courses, they prepare lesson plans and implement them under the mentorship of school teachers and faculty members, discuss their teaching with the mentors, and construct a portfolio that documents their activities during the Practice Teaching courses (Turkish Council of Higher Education [CoHE/YÖK], 2007).

Instruments

In the current study, the following instruments were administered. To evaluate their factorial structures, confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) was conducted considering the fit indexes of X^2/df, Standardized Root Mean Square Residual (SRMR), Normed Fit Index (NFI), Tucker–Lewis Index (TLI), Comparative Fit Index (CFI), and Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA) (Byrne, 2001; Schermelleh-Engel, Moosbrugger, & Müller, 2003; Schreiber, Nora, Stage, Barlow, & King, 2006).

Individual Interest Questionnaire (IIQ; Rotgans, 2015). To measure preservice teachers' interest in social science disciplines, the Individual Interest Questionnaire (IIQ), which was developed by Rotgans (2015), was used. The IIQ consisted of one factor with seven items and used a 5-point Likert scale (1 = *not true at all for me*; 5 = *very true for me*). Rotgans (2015) conducted validity and reliability analyses of the questionnaire in the history, chemistry, and geography domains and found it to be a reliable and valid instrument for measuring individual interest in a variety of disciplines. In the current study, firstly, the IIQ was translated into Turkish by two experts. Secondly, one Turkish form was created from these two translations. Thirdly, the English and Turkish versions were checked by another expert who compared them with each other. Lastly, the Turkish version of the IIQ was finalized in consultation with two other experts. Items in the IIQ (Rotgans, 2015) mostly referred to out-of-school opinions. For example: "*I am very interested in biochemistry*" (p. 73); "*I am interested in biochemistry since I was young*" (p. 74), "*I watch a lot of biochemistry-related TV programs (e.g., Discovery Channel)*" (p. 74). However, the item "*I always look forward to my biochemistry lessons, because I enjoy them a lot*" (p. 73-74) directly referred to the lesson offered at a particular time. However, some subjects were not offered as a lesson in the social studies education program or the elementary education program when the data were collected from the sample in the current study. Therefore, this item was slightly modified as "*I look forward to learning about [DISCIPLINE], because I enjoy it a lot*" to give it a more general meaning.

In the current study, participants answered the IIQ (Rotgans, 2015) for the economics, geography, history, political science, and sociology disciplines. A CFA was performed for each discipline and acceptable fit indices (Byrne, 2001; Hu & Bentler, 1999; Kenny, Kaniskan, & McCoach, 2015; Schermelleh-Engel et al., 2003; Schreiber et al., 2006) were obtained, as follows; for economics: $X^2(14) = 98.12$, $p < .001$, $X^2/df = 7.01$, SRMR = .03, NFI = .95, TLI = .93, CFI = .96, RMSEA = .14 with factor loadings ranging from .75 to .93; for geography: $X^2(14) = 44.40$, $p < .001$, $X^2/df = 3.17$, SRMR = .03, NFI = .97, TLI = .97, CFI = .98, RMSEA = .08 with factor loadings from .71 to .92; for history: $X^2(14) = 72.06$, $p < .001$, $X^2/df = 5.15$, SRMR = .03, NFI = .97, TLI = .96, CFI = .98, RMSEA = .12 with factor loadings from .77 to .96; for political science: $X^2(14) = 72.57$, $p < .001$, $X^2/df = 5.18$, SRMR = .03, NFI = .97, TLI = .96, CFI = .97, RMSEA = .12 with factor loadings from .74 to .94; for sociology: $X^2(14) = 59.35$, $p < .001$, $X^2/df = 4.24$, SRMR = .03, NFI = .97, TLI = .96, CFI = .97, RMSEA = .10 with factor loadings from .75 to .91. Cronbach's alpha was found to be .94, .92, .96, .95, and .94 for individual interest in economics, geography, history, political science, and sociology, respectively.

Planned teaching effort scale for social science topics in social studies. This scale consisted of four items and used a 5-point Likert scale (1 = *not at all*; 5 = *very much*). While some items were written by the researcher, some were adapted from the Planned Effort Subscale of the Professional Engagement and Career Development Aspirations Scale (Eren & Tezel, 2010; Watt & Richardson, 2008) and Work Effort Scale (De Cooman, De Gieter, Pepermans, Jegers, & Van Acker, 2009). Participants answered the following questions asking how much effort they would make in their social studies classes when they became a teacher: *How much effort would you make in teaching the [DISCIPLINE]-related topics in social studies?, How much effort would you make to compensate when the [DISCIPLINE]-related topics in social studies are not learned by your students at the expected level?, How much effort would you make to do your best in teaching the [DISCIPLINE]-related topics in social studies?, How much effort would you make to overcome the difficulties you might encounter while teaching the [DISCIPLINE]-related topics in social studies?*

Participants also answered this scale for economics, geography, history, political science, and sociology. CFAs yielded acceptable fit indices (Byrne, 2001; Hu & Bentler, 1999; Kenny et al., 2015; Schermelleh-Engel et al., 2003; Schreiber et al., 2006) for the one-factor structure of each domain (For economics it was: $X^2(2) = 16.55$, $p < .001$, $X^2/df = 8.28$, SRMR = .02, NFI = .98, TLI = .95, CFI = .99, RMSEA = .15 with factor loadings ranging from .75 to .90; for geography: $X^2(2) = 8.47$, $p < .05$, $X^2/df = 4.24$, SRMR = .03, NFI = .98, TLI = .96, CFI = .99, RMSEA = .10 with factor loadings from .55 to .83; for history: $X^2(2) = .60$, $p > .05$, $X^2/df = .30$, SRMR = .00, NFI = 1.00, TLI = 1.00, CFI = 1.00, RMSEA = .000 with factor loadings from .84 to .93; for political science: $X^2(2) = 20.48$, $p < .001$, $X^2/df = 10.24$, SRMR = .02, NFI = .98, TLI = .96, CFI = .99, RMSEA = .17 with factor loadings from .83 to .93; and for sociology: $X^2(2) = 7.87$, $p < .05$, $X^2/df = 3.93$, SRMR = .01, NFI = .99, TLI = .99, CFI = 1.00, RMSEA = .10 with factor loadings from .82 to .93). Cronbach's alpha was found to be .92, .82, .94, .94, and .94 for planned teaching effort concerning social studies topics in relation to economics, geography, history, political science, and sociology, respectively.

Data Analysis

The CFAs were conducted using AMOS to analyze the scales' construct validity (Bayram, 2010; Byrne, 2001; Meydan & Şeşen, 2011). Cronbach's alpha reliability coefficients and analyses in relation to the research questions were performed with the SPSS program. To compare interest in economics, geography, history, political science, and sociology and also planned teaching efforts for these disciplines' topics in social studies, one-way repeated-measures ANOVA was used. To examine whether interest predicted planned teaching effort for these same topics in social studies, bivariate linear regression (simple regression) analysis was used (Field, 2009; Green & Salkind, 2005). A significance level of $p < .05$ was considered in all analyses.

Research Findings

Table 1 shows the means, standard deviations, and one-way repeated-measures ANOVA results comparing interest in economics, geography, history, political science, and sociology and as well as the planned teaching effort for social studies topics in relation to these disciplines.

Table 1. *Means, Standard Deviations, and Differences in Interest in Social Science Disciplines and in Planned Teaching Efforts for Social Science Disciplines' Topics in Social Studies*

	Eco		Geo		Hist		Pol		Soc				
Variables	*M*	*SD*	*M*	*SD*	*M*	*SD*	*M*	*SD*	*M*	*SD*	*F*	*p*	η_p^2
Preservice elementary school teachers (n = 222)[a]													
Interest	2.04	.92	2.68	.90	3.16	1.13	2.40	1.07	2.67	.98	45.40	< .001	.45
Teaching Effort	3.81	.77	4.27	.57	4.57	.61	3.84	.91	4.25	.78	52.66	< .001	.49
Preservice social studies teachers (n = 94)[b]													
Interest	2.08	.95	3.18	1.04	4.11	.98	3.05	1.14	3.04	.91	49.59	< .001	.69
Teaching Effort	3.73	.75	4.34	.56	4.75	.41	3.98	.79	4.16	.79	40.31	< .001	.64

Note. Eco = Economics; Geo = Geography; Hist = History; Pol = Political science; Soc = Sociology.
[a]*df* = 4, 218. [b]*df* = 4, 90.

As seen in Table 1, both preservice elementary school teachers and preservice social studies teachers were most interested in history (*M* = 3.16, *SD* = 1.13; *M* = 4.11, *SD* = .98, respectively) and geography (*M* = 2.68, *SD* = .90; *M* = 3.18, *SD* = 1.04, respectively). History and geography were followed by sociology (*M* = 2.67, *SD* = .98), political science (*M* = 2.40, *SD* = 1.07) and economics (*M* = 2.04, *SD* = .92) for preservice elementary school teachers but political science (*M* = 3.05, *SD* = 1.14), sociology (*M* = 3.04, *SD* = .91) and economics (*M* = 2.08, *SD* = .95) for preservice social studies teachers.

The planned teaching efforts of preservice elementary school teachers and preservice social studies teachers for the social studies topics in relation to the disciplines (economics, geography, history, political science, and sociology) were similar. Both groups thought to make the most

effort toward history-related social studies topics (M = 4.57, SD = .61; M = 4.75, SD = .41, respectively) followed by geography (M = 4.27, SD = .57; M = 4.34, SD = .56, respectively), sociology (M = 4.25, SD = .78; M = 4.16, SD = .79, respectively), political science (M = 3.84, SD = .91; M = 3.98, SD = .79, respectively) and economics (M = 3.81, SD = .77; M = 3.73, SD = .75, respectively).

The results of one-way repeated-measures ANOVA showed that the interest of both preservice teacher groups in economics, geography, history, political science, and sociology differed significantly from each other (preservice elementary school teachers: Wilks's $\Lambda = .55$, F (4, 218) = 45.40, $p < .001$, $\eta_p^2 = .45$; preservice social studies teachers: Wilks's $\Lambda = .31$, F (4, 90) = 49.59, $p < .001$, $\eta_p^2 = .69$). Bonferroni multiple comparisons revealed that preservice elementary teachers' interest in history was significantly higher than economics, geography, political science and sociology ($p < .001$ for all); geography was significantly higher than economics ($p < .001$) and political science ($p < .01$); sociology was significantly higher than economics ($p < .001$) and political science ($p < .05$); and political science was significantly higher than economics ($p < .001$). Similarly, preservice social studies teachers' interest in history was significantly higher than economics, geography, political science, and sociology ($p < .001$ for all). In addition, geography, political science, and sociology interest was significantly higher than economics ($p < .001$ for all).

In the same vein, the planned teaching effort of both preservice elementary school teachers and preservice social studies teachers for economics, geography, history, political science, and sociology-related topics in social studies differed significantly from each other (preservice elementary school teachers: Wilks's $\Lambda = .51$, F (4, 218) = 52.66, $p < .001$, $\eta_p^2 = .49$; preservice social studies teachers: Wilks's $\Lambda = .36$, F (4, 90) = 40.31, $p < .001$, $\eta_p^2 = .64$). Bonferroni multiple comparisons indicated that preservice elementary school teachers' planned teaching efforts for history-related topics were significantly higher than economics, geography, political science, and sociology ($p < .001$ for all); while geography and sociology related-topics were higher than economics and political science ($p < .001$ for all). Similarly, preservice social studies teachers' planned teaching efforts for history-related topics in social studies were significantly higher than economics, geography, political science, and sociology ($p < .001$ for all); with geography higher than economics and political science ($p < .001$ both). Also, planned teaching efforts for political science- and sociology-related topics in social studies were significantly higher than economics ($p < .01$ and $p < .001$, respectively)

Table 2 displays the correlations between interest in the social science disciplines (i.e., economics, geography, history, political science, and sociology) and planned teaching effort for social studies topics in relation to these disciplines.

Table 2. *Correlations of Interest in Social Science Disciplines with Planned Teaching Efforts for Social Science Disciplines' Topics in Social Studies*

	Planned Teaching Effort for Social Studies Topics in Relation to				
	Economics	Geography	History	Political Science	Sociology
Interest in	Preservice elementary school teachers (n = 222)				
Economics	.27**	-.09	-.05	.06	-.14*
Geography	-.02	.27**	.15*	-.00	.01
History	-.04	.02	.39**	.03	-.09
Political science	.10	-.01	.12	.30**	.05
Sociology	.06	.15*	-.01	.16*	.37**
Interest in	Preservice social studies teachers (n = 94)				
Economics	.23*	-.18	-.18	-.02	-.06
Geography	.08	.29**	-.14	.07	-.16
History	.07	-.05	.64**	.30**	-.01
Political Science	.21*	.01	.15	.42**	.03
Sociology	.18	.01	.02	.20	.44**

*. $p < .05$. **. $p < .01$.

As observed in Table 2, there were significant and positive correlations between the interest of preservice elementary school teachers and preservice social studies teachers in economics and their planned teaching effort for economics-related topics in social studies ($r = .27$, $p < .01$ and $r = .23$, $p < .05$, respectively). There were also significant and positive correlations between their interest in geography and their planned teaching effort for geography-related topics ($r = .27$, $p < .01$ and $r = .29$, $p < .01$, respectively), between their interest in history and their planned teaching effort for history-related topics ($r = .39$, $p < .01$ and $r = .64$, $p < .01$, respectively), between their interest in political science and their planned teaching effort for political science-related topics ($r = .30$, $p < .01$ and $r = .42$, $p < .01$, respectively), and between their interest in sociology and their planned teaching effort for sociology-related topics ($r = .37$, $p < .01$ and $r = .44$, $p < .01$, respectively).

Tables 3 and 4 present the results of bivariate linear regression analyses performed to predict the planned teaching effort for social studies topics related to economics, geography, history, political science, and sociology based on the participants' interest in these five disciplines.

Table 3. *Regression Analyses for Preservice Elementary School Teachers' Interest in Social Sciences Predicting Planned Teaching Efforts for Social Science Disciplines' Topics in Social Studies (N = 222)*

	B	*SE B*	β	*t*	*p*	R^2	*F* (1, 220)	*p*
Predictor Variable	Planned Teaching Effort for Economics-Related Social Studies Topics							
Constant	3.36	.12		27.65	< .001			
Interest in Economics	.22	.05	.27	4.09	< .001	.07	16.69	< .001
	Planned Teaching Effort for Geography-Related Social Studies Topics							
Constant	3.81	.12		32.93	< .001			
Interest in Geography	.17	.04	.27	4.22	< .001	.08	17.84	< .001
	Planned Teaching Effort for History-Related Social Studies Topics							
Constant	3.91	.11		34.97	< .001			
Interest in History	.21	.03	.39	6.24	< .001	.15	38.91	< .001
	Planned Teaching Effort for Political Science-Related Social Studies Topics							
Constant	3.22	.14		22.25	< .001			
Interest in Political Science	.26	.06	.30	4.72	< .001	.09	22.30	< .001
	Planned Teaching Effort for Sociology-Related Social Studies Topics							
Constant	3.46	.14		24.55	< .001			
Interest in Sociology	.30	.05	.37	5.97	< .001	.14	35.64	< .001

As seen in Table 3, preservice elementary school teachers' interest in economics explained 7% of variance, F (1, 220) = 16.69, p <.001, geography explained 8% of variance, F (1, 220) = 17.84, p <.001, history explained 15% of variance, F (1, 220) = 38.91, p <.001, political science explained 9% of variance, F (1, 220) = 22.30, p <.001, and sociology explained 14% of variance, F (1, 220) = 35.64, p < .001, in their planned teaching efforts for economics, geography, history, political science, and sociology-related topics in social studies classes, respectively. Moreover, interest in economics, geography, history, political science, and sociology predicted positively and significantly their planned teaching effort for economics (β = .27, p < .001), geography (β = .27, p < .001), history (β = .39, p < .001), political science (β = .30, p < .001), and sociology-related topics (β = .37, p < .001), respectively.

Table 4. *Regression Analyses for Preservice Social Studies Teachers' Interest in Social Sciences Predicting Planned Teaching Efforts for Social Science Disciplines' Topics in Social Studies (N = 94)*

	B	*SE B*	β	*t*	*p*	R^2	*F*(1, 92)	*p*
Predictor Variable	Planned Teaching Effort for Economics-Related Social Studies Topics							
Constant	3.35	.18		18.36	< .001			
Interest in Economics	.18	.08	.23	2.25	.027	.05	5.06	.027
	Planned Teaching Effort for Geography-Related Social Studies Topics							
Constant	3.85	.18		21.27	< .001			
Interest in Geography	.16	.05	.29	2.89	.005	.08	8.36	.005
	Planned Teaching Effort for History-Related Social Studies Topics							
Constant	3.64	.14		25.63	< .001			
Interest in History	.27	.03	.64	8.03	< .001	.41	64.41	< .001
	Planned Teaching Effort for Political Science-Related Social Studies Topics							
Constant	3,09	.21		14,55	< .001			
Interest in Political Science	.29	.07	.42	4,48	< .001	.18	20.08	< .001
	Planned Teaching Effort for Sociology-Related Social Studies Topics							
Constant	3.00	.26		11.75	< .001			
Interest in Sociology	.38	.08	.44	4.74	< .001	.20	22.46	< .001

Table 4 showed that preservice social studies teachers' interest in economics explained 5% of variance, F (1, 92) = 5.06, $p < .05$, geography explained 8% of variance, F (1, 92) = 8.36, $p < .01$, history explained 41% of variance, F (1, 92) = 64.41, $p < .001$, political science explained 18% of variance, F (1, 92) = 20.08, $p < .001$, and sociology explained 20% of variance, F (1, 92) = 22.46, $p < .001$, in their planned teaching efforts for economics, geography, history, political science, and sociology-related topics in social studies, respectively. In addition, interest in economics, geography, history, political science, and sociology predicted positively and significantly their planned teaching effort for economics (β = .23, p < .05), geography (β = .29, p < .01), history (β = .64, p < .001), political science (β = .42, p < .001), and sociology-related topics (β = .44, p < .001), respectively.

Discussion of Findings

The results of this study revealed that both preservice elementary school teachers and preservice social studies teachers were interested in history the most. Geography was the second most interesting discipline compared with the others. Economics was the discipline of least interest. A similar pattern was found for planned teaching effort. Results indicated a significant preference

in teaching effort for history-related topics in social studies classes over all other disciplines. Geography followed history. It was found that preservice teachers planned to make the least effort in teaching economics-related topics, corroborating the idea that individual interest is domain-specific and may change based on the disciplines investigated (Lawless & Kulikowich, 2006; Lazarides et al., 2018; Renninger & Hidi, 2011). These findings are also consistent with previous research into interest in social science disciplines which found that preservice teachers were most interested in history and geography (Akpınar & Ayvacı, 2003; Demircioğlu, 2006). Moreover, Deveci, Çengelci Köse, and Gürdoğan Bayır (2014) found that preservice teachers explained social science and social studies concepts using mostly history and geography terms among other social science disciplines, which might also suggest that history and geography are the most interesting disciplines compared with others in the social studies curriculum (Deveci et al., 2014). Karasu Avcı's (2017) study showed that preservice social studies teachers defined social studies chiefly by referring to history and geography, and most of these preservice teachers were under the impression that the aim of the social studies curriculum was to teach about history and geography. In addition, it was found that these preservice teachers' liking for history and geography was an influential factor on their reasons for choosing the teaching profession (Karasu Avcı, 2017).

A likely explanation for these results might be that participants of the current study might have been exposed to history- and geography-related content more than other social sciences in their educational life. On the elementary and middle school social studies curriculum, geography- and history-related objectives were specified more than other social science disciplines (Akpınar & Kaymakcı, 2012; Deveci et al., 2014; Keçe & Merey, 2011; MoNE/MEB, 2018; Tay, 2017). Furthermore, when the subject matter and general culture courses are examined in the undergraduate teacher training programs currently in use, it is clear that there are more course credits for history- and geography-related courses than other social sciences, both in the undergraduate social studies teacher program (CoHE/YÖK, 2007; Kaymakcı, 2012; Tonga, 2012) and in the undergraduate elementary school teacher program (CoHE/YÖK, 2007).

It is argued that prior knowledge or level of knowledge of a subject has an impact on interest development in that subject (Dan & Todd, 2014; Ekstam et al., 2017; Hidi & Renninger, 2006; Jarrett, 1999; Kim & Schallert, 2014; Lawless & Kulikowich, 2006; Renninger, 2009). Therefore, all the exposure from elementary school through to university might have resulted in a higher level of interest in particular social sciences. Supporting this is research by Akpınar and Ayvacı (2003) who found that allocation of more time to certain social sciences than others caused some preservice social studies teachers to develop more interest in these courses. Furthermore, Jarrett (1999) found that preservice elementary teachers' positive science experience in their elementary and high school years, as well as science courses taken in college, were a significant and positive predictor of their science interest. Similarly, Bulunuz and Jarrett (2010) found that positive science experience in elementary school influenced the interest of preservice elementary teachers in science.

This study also demonstrated that the interest of both preservice elementary school teachers and preservice social studies teachers in economics, geography, history, political science, and sociology correlated with and influenced positively and significantly their planned teaching effort for topics of these disciplines in social studies. Results suggested that the more preservice

teachers were interested in economics, geography, history, political science, and sociology, the more effort they would make in teaching social studies topics related to them. These results corroborate a great deal of previous literature on the positive relationship between interest and effort/persistence (Ainley et al., 2002; Akpınar & Ayvacı, 2003; Cin, 2007; Eren, 2012; Harackiewicz & Hulleman, 2010; Hidi & Renninger, 2006; Kadıoğlu, 2008; Long & Woolfolk Hoy, 2006; Retelsdorf et al., 2010; Schiefele, 1991; Schiefele & Schaffner, 2015; Schiefele et al., 2013; Singh et al., 2002).

Given the results of the current study that economics, political science, and sociology are social science disciplines of less interest compared with history and geography, preservice teachers would be expected to make less effort in the topics of these less interesting disciplines, and results of previous studies which showed that teacher interest stimulated student interest in the subjects (Lazarides et al., 2019; Schiefele & Schaffner, 2015) as well as motivation and learning (Lazarides et al., 2018; Long & Woolfolk Hoy, 2006)—unless informal experience supports development of their interest in these disciplines (Bulunuz & Jarrett, 2010; Harackiewicz et al., 2016; Jarrett, 1999)—it is plausible to hypothesize that future teacher candidates might also be less interested in economics, political science, and sociology, as well as their students.

Findings from this study suggest that in order for elementary and social studies teachers to exert efforts in all objectives of the social studies curriculum, or be determined to reach all objectives of the social studies curriculum, we need to improve their individual interest in social sciences that the social studies curriculum is drawn from. In particular, preservice elementary school teachers and preservice social studies teachers should be supported in order to develop an interest in the disciplines of economics, political science, and sociology. Teacher educators must accept the critical role played by the teacher in developing interest in some domains or school subjects (Hidi & Renninger, 2006) and support interest development in preservice teachers (Lazarides et al., 2019). For this, teacher educators could use student-centered teaching methods (e.g., problem-based instruction), link the subject to real life, support student autonomy in their courses (Akpınar & Ayvacı, 2003; Bulunuz & Jarrett, 2010; Cin, 2007; Dan & Todd, 2014; Demircioğlu, 2004, 2006; Harackiewicz et al., 2016; Hidi & Harackiewicz, 2000; Jarrett, 1999; Kadıoğlu, 2008; Linnenbrink-Garcia et al., 2013; Renninger & Hidi, 2011; Rotgans & Schmidt, 2011, 2017, 2018; Schiefele, 1991; Tella et al., 2009; Yılmaz, 2010), communicate the message to preservice teachers that they also value the discipline they teach (Harackiewicz & Hulleman, 2010; Kim & Schallert, 2014; Long & Woolfolk Hoy, 2006), and be effortful and persistent in their own teaching (Kunter et al., 2008; Lazarides et al., 2018; Long & Woolfolk Hoy, 2006; Schiefele & Schaffner, 2015). Finally, since knowledge plays a pivotal role in interest (Dan & Todd, 2014; Ekstam et al., 2017; Hidi & Renninger, 2006; Jarrett, 1999; Kim & Schallert, 2014; Lawless & Kulikowich, 2006; Renninger, 2009), elementary school and social studies teacher education programs should include a variety of social sciences or social science-related courses beyond history and geography to support the knowledge domain (Yılmaz, 2009, 2010).

Limitations and Recommendations for Future Research

The findings of this study are subject to several limitations. First, the data were collected from the faculty of education of one state university. Further research with different samples would be helpful to confirm the findings of this study. Second, this study used quantitative research.

Therefore, to better understand the relationship between preservice teachers' interest in social sciences and planned teaching effort for topics of these social sciences in social studies classes, qualitative research with observations in their Practice Teaching courses and interviews are recommended for future research (Creswell, 2012). Finally, although this study examined the relationship between interest in economics, geography, history, political science, and sociology and the planned teaching effort for these social sciences' topics in social studies, the factors that influenced interest in these disciplines were beyond the scope of this study. Thus, future research examining the variables that impact preservice teachers' interest in social sciences is recommended.

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