THE VIEW OF PROSPECTIVE SOCIAL STUDIES TEACHERS ON BLENDED LEARNING

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ABSTRACT

With the effect of technology and the pandemic, different approaches have begun to come to the fore in the understanding of education. Blended learning, which is one of these approaches, is known as the combination of distance education and face-to-face education with the support of educational technologies. It is becoming more widespread. Therefore, teachers and prospective teachers are expected to be competent in blended learning. The aim of this study is to determine the views of social studies prospective teachers on blended learning. The data of this study, which was carried out in the basic qualitative research design, were obtained through semi-structured interviews. The data were analyzed inductively using the NVivo12 software. As a result of the research, it is seen that blended learning saves time and enables multidimensional learning. On the other hand, technological inadequacies and reduced socialization are seen as limitations of this approach. They state that there are many tools that can be used in this approach where the responsibilities of teachers and students increase. All of the participants say that they do not have sufficient knowledge about the application process and models of blended learning and they consider their undergraduate education insufficient in this regard. In line with the results of the study, it is recommended to include blended teaching practices in teacher education.

Keywords: Blended learning, social studies, teacher education, teaching approaches.

INTRODUCTION

Just as education has an impact on society, society also has an undeniable impact on education. The philosophies and approaches that guide educational activities adapt to the general characteristics of the period in which we live. Technological developments, the needs of the society and the individual, and the social, political, and economic environment of the period determine the quality of educational activities (Bacanak, Karamustafaoglu, & Kose, 2003). Many of the developments that have an impact on the lifestyle of most people in the world occur in the field of technology. After the 2000s, many areas of life have been affected by the internet surrounding all people in the world. Education services have also been affected by this change and new approaches have become visible in education. One of them is blended learning. There are many definitions of blended learning. While Horton (2000) defines blended learning as combining the strengths of computer-assisted learning and face-to-face learning, Garrison and Vaughan (2008) emphasize the balanced and harmonious combination of face-to-face education and online education. The development of blended learning is based on the computer-based learning model. However, it has been possible to take its current form with the introduction of the internet. Thus, the opportunity to access more students in distance education has emerged and education technologies have started to contribute more to face-to-face education processes.
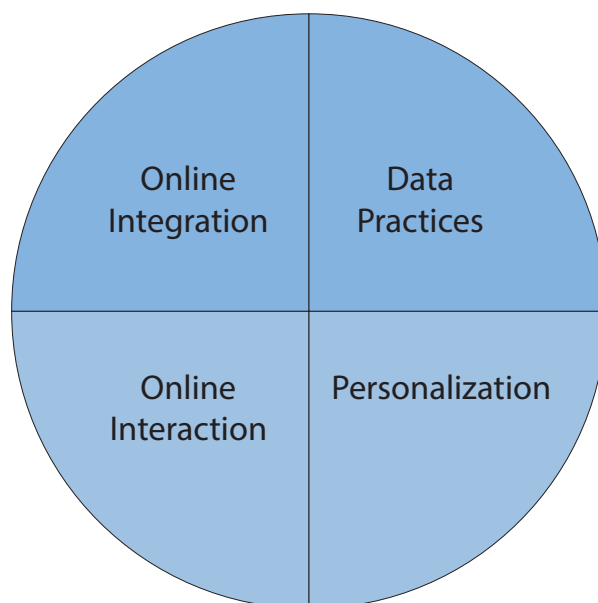
Figure 1. Components of blended learning

Four components make up blended learning. These components shown in Figure 1 are as follows; online integration, data practices, personalization, and online interaction. Blended learning is based on the integration of online and face-to-face activities. The online integration component includes the integration of face-to-face and distance education. The next component, data practices, means the use of data practices at all stages of both integration and teaching. The personalization component explains situations such as the ability of students to adjust their own learning pace, the ability to give personalized feedback, and the opportunity of personalized learning space in blended learning. Finally, online interaction refers to the interaction between teachers and students in distance education processes and emphasizes that the activities carried out in blended learning are not one-sided (Graham, Borup, Short, & Archambault, 2019). Whatever model of blended learning is adopted, it should include these basic components.

There are four different models of blended learning in practice. These models are rotation model, flex model, A La Carte model, and enriched virtual model (Christensen, Staker, & Horn, 2013). The rotation model is a model in which face-to-face education has a more important place than other models. It has some sub-models in itself. These are the station rotation model, lab rotation model, and flipped classroom model. In the station model, students work in small groups between different stations on a rotating basis. At least one of these stations must contain online activities. The lab model, on the other hand, has a practice process in which online education activities are carried out in computer laboratories in schools. Finally, the flipped classroom model is a model in which theoretical knowledge is learned individually at home with the help of educational technologies, and effective learning studies based on practices aiming to reinforce and expand this knowledge are carried out in the classroom. Another main model of blended learning is the flex model. In the flex model, online learning is the backbone of student learning while face-to-face education has a supportive role. In this model, students have more flexibility in making decisions on their own learning. In the A La Carte model, students take some courses of their choice through distance education as well as face-to-face education. In this way, students continue some of their courses completely online, and some of their courses completely face-to-face. Finally, in the enriched virtual model, while students take all of their courses online, they use face-to-face training only for support purposes. This model of blended learning has the least effect on face-to-face education (Graham, Borup, Short, & Archambault, 2019). Considering the four basic components of blended learning, the practice process carried out in line with a specific model brings many benefits for both teachers and students.

It is possible to collect the contributions of blended learning under three main headings. These are increased effective learning, increased cost-effectiveness, increased access, and flexibility (Graham, 2006). In addition to these, other important benefits of blended learning are that it increases students' participation in the

lesson, allows students to adjust the learning pace, personalizes teaching, reduces dependency on space, increases interaction outside the school, and provides fast and personalized feedback (Wilson & Smilanich, 2005). In addition to these benefits in practice, it brings many educational outcomes. It is also known that students develop communication skills, cooperation, critical thinking skills, and creativity in classrooms where blended teaching is implemented (Dziuban et al., 2018; Graham et al., 2019). In addition, it is among the contributions of blended learning that students increase their success, enable them to take their own educational responsibilities, and provide diversity in resources (Bursa & Cengelci Kose, 2019; Porter et al., 2014; Wilson & Smilanich, 2005).

Despite many contributions of blended learning, it has some limitations in practice. The most important of these limitations is experienced in access to technology. Variables such as the socio-economic level of the students, and the opportunities of the school and the environment may cause some inadequacies in students' access to technological devices and regular internet (Sethy, 2008). It is also possible in this process for students to experience a loss of motivation, especially against distance education (Fresen, 2007). Blended learning also brings some difficulties for teachers. Teachers are required to create or select distance learning content, edit and share them with students. All these processes require teachers to devote more time to the out-of-class preparation process, in addition to the requirement of techno-pedagogical content knowledge (TPACK). These requirements may cause some teachers to have difficulties (John, 2006).

Students and teachers have new duties and responsibilities in blended learning classrooms. One of the most basic tasks of students in this process is to participate in online activities outside of school and to fulfill the responsibility of learning in a self-controlled way. In addition, participating in active learning activities in the classroom, developing materials, taking part in group studies, and sharing comments and questions about online learning activities constitute other important duties of the students (Bergmann & Sams, 2012). Besides students, teachers have many duties and roles. The main task of teachers outside of the classroom is to produce the content convenient for online learning services or to select from ready-made content, edit and share them with their students. In addition, following students' participation in online activities, giving them feedback, and keeping their interest and motivation levels high are other duties of the teachers (Bates, Almekdash, & Gilchrest-Dunnam, 2017). In addition to these, they need to make preliminary preparations for the active learning activities to be carried out in the classroom, prepare the activity plans, implement these activities by guiding students and work on reinforcing the online activities (Marsh, 2012).

It is seen that there are many duties and responsibilities that teachers have to fulfill in blended learning. The quality of the education the teachers receive directly affects their success in applying blended learning. For this reason, it is considered important that teachers have learned about blended learning in the pre-service or in-service trainings (Atmacasoy & Aksu, 2017). After the long-term break of face-to-face education due to a pandemic in recent years, many universities have started to implement the blended learning approach in some of their courses. However, when the contents of the compulsory and elective courses in the Social Studies Teacher Training Program, which has been prepared by the The Council of Higher Education (YOK) and implemented in Turkiye since 2018, are examined, there is no information about blended learning in the content of any of these courses. For this reason, it is necessary to reveal the views of prospective social studies teachers on the theory and practices of blended learning.

When the literature is examined, it is seen that there are some studies on blended learning in Social Studies or the flipped classroom model, which is one of the sub-models of blended learning. It is noteworthy that the number of these studies has increased especially in the last five years. Some of these studies in the field of social studies are conducted at undergraduate level (Arifin, et al., 2019; Ganiyu & Ojewale, 2018; Gokdemir, 2018; Rinehardt-Cline, 2018) and at secondary school level (Ashiru & Zakari, 2020; Bursa & Cengelci Kose, 2020; Duffy, 2016; Dursunlar, 2018; Erdogan, 2018; Karaman, 2018; Mings, 2018; Nayci, 2017; Saritepeci, 2012; Sogut, 2019; Sahin, 2021; Sahin, 2020; Serefli, 2020; Uzun, 2019; Winter, 2016; Yayi, Yusuf & Jarimi, 2018; Yildiz, 2011). With these studies carried out with the blended learning or flipped classroom model, it has been found that blended learning in social studies education increases the academic achievement of students (Ashiru & Zakari, 2020; Duffy, 2016; Dursunlar, 2018; Erdogan, 2018; Gokdemir, 2018; Mings, 2018; Rinehardt-Cline, 2018; Sogut, 2019; Sahin, 2021; Sahin, 2020; Uzun, 2019; Yayi, Yusuf & Jarimi, 2018; Yildiz, 2011), provides effectiveness in learning (Karaman, 2018), increases student effort and performance and affects students' attitudes positively (Nayci, 2017; Saritepeci,

2012; Serefli, 2020), increases the level of students' responsibility (Bursa & Cengelci Kose, 2020), affects group works positively (Winter, 2016), enhances interaction with teachers and students (Karaman, 2018), promote a learning-friendly environment, and promoting zero waste (Arifin, et al., 2019).

THE IMPORTANCE AND PURPOSE

Despite all studies in the literature, to our knowledge, there is no study determining the views of prospective social studies teachers on blended learning. The blended learning approach, which has become widespread throughout the world and Turkiye, has gained even more importance, especially with the pandemic. With this study, it is considered important to determine the competencies of prospective teachers, who will be practitioners of blended teaching in their future career, and to have a formative effect on teacher education. Therefore, the aim of this study is to determine the views of prospective social studies teachers on blended learning. For this purpose, the answers to the following research questions were sought:

1. How do prospective social studies teachers define blended learning?
2. What do prospective social studies teachers think about blended learning models?
3. What do prospective social studies teachers think about the advantages and disadvantages of blended learning?
4. What do prospective social studies teachers think about the roles of teacher and student in blended learning?
5. What do prospective social studies teachers think about the role of blended learning in social studies education?
6. How do prospective social studies teachers evaluate their undergraduate education in the context of blended learning training?

METHOD

This research, in which prospective social studies teachers' views on blended learning were determined, was carried out in a basic qualitative research design in accordance with the qualitative research approach. In this design, the main purpose of the researchers is to reveal and interpret the meaning that the participants created regarding the subject under investigation (Merriam, 2009). In this study, it was tried to determine how the participants give meaning to blended learning and the semantic structure they created about blended learning.

Participants

Purposive sampling methods were used in the determination of the participants of the study in accordance with the qualitative research approach (Yildirim & Simsek, 2013). In this context, a total of six prospective social studies teachers, who have taken more than 75% of the courses in the social studies teacher training program, constitute the participants of the study. In this way, it is aimed that the prospective teachers who are in the last year of the social studies teaching undergraduate program will present more detailed views about the program. The participants were selected voluntarily and codes were used instead of participants' real names in the study. Participants were informed that they could leave the study whenever they wanted. In addition, their consent was obtained regarding their voluntary participation in the study. Information about the participants is given in Table 1.

Table 1. Information about the participants

Code names of the participants	Gender
Tayfun	M
Seda	F
Fatma	F
Kemal	M
Nuray	F
Serkan	M

As seen in Table 1, the participants of the study consisted of three female and three male prospective social studies teachers.

Data Collection and Analysis

The data of the study were collected through semi-structured interviews from the prospective teachers. One of the data collection tools used in the basic qualitative research design is semi-structured interviews (Merriam, 2009). Semi-structured interviews provide flexibility to the researcher and allow asking new questions during the interview (Yildirim & Simsek, 2013). First of all, the researcher formed semi-structured interview questions based on the literature. The draft questions formed by the researcher were examined by 2 experts working in the field of social studies education and the interview questions were finalized in line with their opinions. Afterward, interviews were conducted with six prospective teachers using interview questions and the data of the study were collected. The data of the study were collected in 2021.

Data were analyzed inductively. In line with the inductive content analysis, codes and themes were identified and then, semantic structures were examined (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Nvivo 12 qualitative data analysis software was used for the data analysis. In order to increase the reliability of the study, the data of the study were analyzed by an expert working in the field of social studies education other than the researcher, and the analyzes were compared. Miles and Huberman's inter-coder reliability formula was used for inter-coder reliability. Accordingly, the analyzes of the researcher and the coder were compared and the agreement was found to be 89%. This result reveals the existence of a strong agreement (Miles & Huberman, 1994). As a result of this comparison, it was seen that the inter-coder reliability between the experts was found to be high. Direct quotations are included in the presentation of the findings obtained from the data analysis.

FINDINGS

The findings of the study are presented under the headings in accordance with the purposes of the study. These titles are as follows; definition of blended learning, blended learning models, advantages and disadvantages of blended learning, roles of teachers and students in blended learning, and evaluation of blended learning in social studies undergraduate program.

Definition of Blended Learning

The first finding of the study is related to the definition of blended learning. Participants Tayfun, Kemal, and Serkan defined blended learning as a combination of face-to-face education and distance education. Tayfun used the following expressions while defining blended learning: *"The type of education that emerges as a result of the joint use of face-to-face education and distance education."* On the other hand, Seda, Fatma, and Nuray used the definition of the flipped classroom model, which is one of the sub-models of blended learning, while defining blended learning. Fatma, one of the participants, defined blended learning with the following statements: *"Blended learning is when students reinforce and make the knowledge they have learned in face-to-face education permanent by using technology in online environments."* These statements showed that half of the participants confused blended learning with the flipped classroom model. Thus, it is seen that pre-service teachers have limitations in defining blended learning. This can be explained by the limited blended learning experiences of prospective teachers.

Models of Blended Learning

There are four main models and three sub-models of blended learning. Under this heading, the findings obtained in line with the views of prospective teachers on blended learning models are presented (Figure 2).
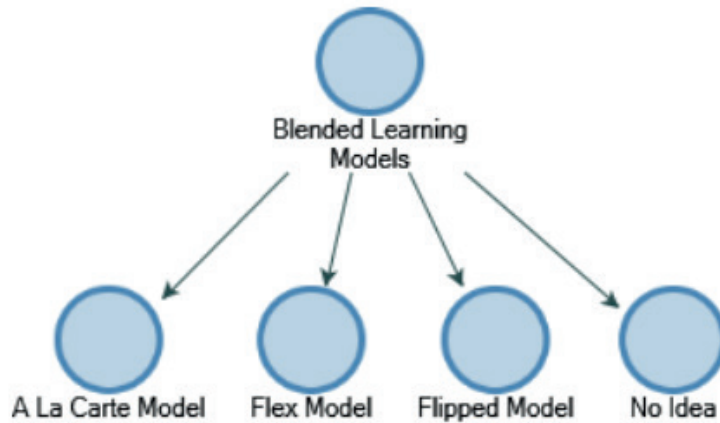
Figure 2. Blended learning models

As can be seen in Figure 2, prospective teachers presented their views on two main models and a sub-model of blended learning. However, only two of the prospective teachers expressed their opinions about the models, and the other prospective teachers said that they did not have any ideas on this subject. Kemal, one of the participants, stated that he had heard of the flex model and the A La Carte model. Fatma, on the other hand, said that she knew the flipped classroom model and explained it with the following words: *"In the flipped classroom model, the information to be learned is accessed online, the student comes to the course prepared by studying it. Instead of giving lectures in the classroom, priority is given to discussions, activities and reinforcing the subject."* Other participants stated that they did not have any knowledge about blended learning models. This shows that although they took most of the courses in the social studies teacher training program, most of the participants did not know about blended learning models. This can be explained by the fact that blended learning is rarely found in the content of the courses they take and in their personal works.

Advantages and Disadvantages of Blended Learning

Considering the basic components and assumptions of blended learning it brings many advantages in the classrooms where blended learning models are applied. In this regard, prospective teachers mentioned many advantages of blended learning. These advantages are as shown in Figure 3.

Figure 3. Advantages of blended learning

As seen in Figure 3, prospective teachers stated that there are many advantages of blended learning. Five of the participants stated that the most important advantage of blended learning is that it reinforces teaching. Tayfun, one of the participants, expressed his views on the advantages of blended learning as follows: "*As the lessons will be taught both face-to-face and online, it will be easier for the teacher to teach the lesson and this may provide more detailed and in-depth learning for the students.*" Three of the participants mentioned the increase in the possibility of doing activities in the classrooms thanks to blended learning. Fatma, one of the participants, gave examples of in-class activities that can be done in the social studies lesson with blended learning with the following statements: "*Time can be allocated for watching videos, movies and documentaries that can be used to reinforce the subject and ensure the permanence of learning in blended learning.*" Two participants emphasized the increase in the number of learning spaces that students can use thanks to blended learning. In this regard, Seda used the following expressions: "*Blended learning has removed the limitation of the classroom or school, and has transformed every space with internet and technological equipment into a learning environment.*"

Participants stated that blended learning has many advantages, but it also has disadvantages, albeit a limited number. The disadvantages of blended learning stated by the participants are introduced in Figure 4.
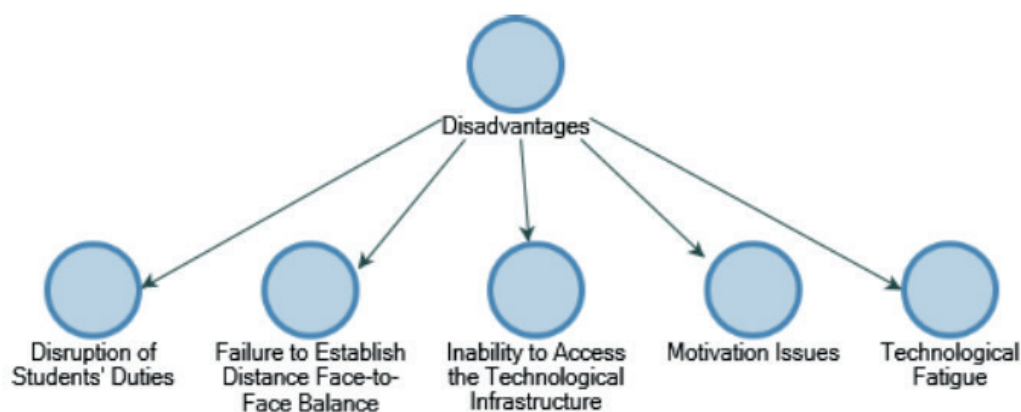

Figure 4. Disadvantages of blended learning

While two of the prospective teachers stated that they did not think of any disadvantages of blended learning, four of them expressed some disadvantages of blended learning. The most frequently expressed disadvantage of blended learning is the problem of not being able to reach the technological infrastructure. Fatma conveyed her views on the disadvantages of blended learning as follows: "*For students who have limited access to technological tools and internet problems, blended learning cannot achieve its purpose.*" The second most frequently stated disadvantage of blended learning is negligence. Nuray explains her views on this issue as follows:

> *Not every student can fulfill their responsibilities and perform the action of accessing information by using online services. In this case, not all of the students in the class can participate in the activities and topic discussions held in the classroom environment*

In addition, the decrease in student motivation, the lack of a good balance between distance education and face-to-face education in lessons, and the technological fatigue that can be experienced due to the fact that both social and educational life are based on technology are other disadvantages mentioned by the participants. Thus, the prospective teachers stated that despite the many advantages of blended learning, it has a limited number of disadvantages.

The Roles of Teachers and Students in Blended Learning

Performance and motivation of teachers and students have an important place in the successful implementation of blended learning. There are many tasks that are expected to be fulfilled by both teachers and students in the classroom and out-of-class processes, and there are roles they need to undertake in these processes. In

this regard, the participants expressed many tasks and roles expected to be carried out by both teachers and students. The statements of the participants about the teachers' tasks and roles are given in Figure 5.
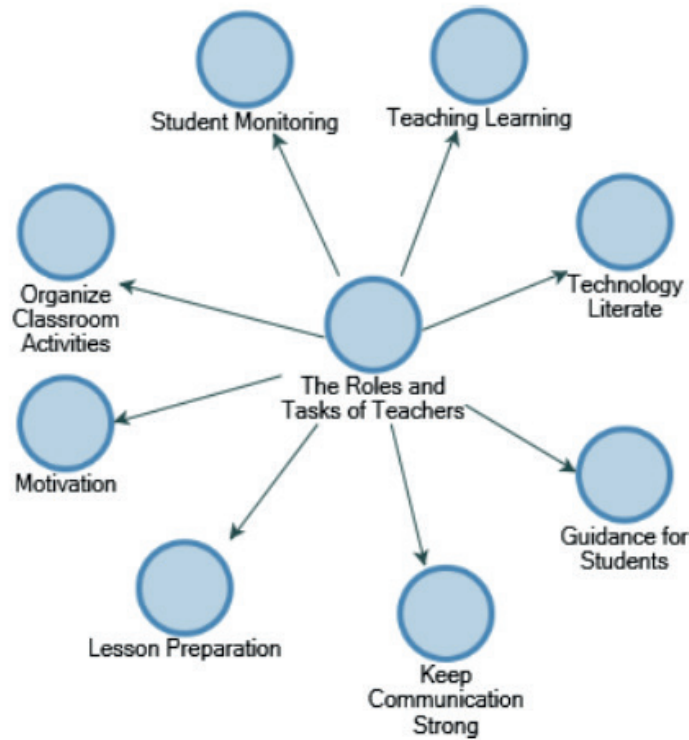

Figure 5. The Roles and Tasks of Teachers

As shown in Figure 5, the participants emphasized some of the in-class and out-of-class tasks of teachers in blended learning processes. Organizing classroom activities, having techno-pedagogic content knowledge and following students were the tasks frequently highlighted by the prospective teachers. Kemal, who thought that teachers should have techno-pedagogic content knowledge, expressed his views as follows: *"Teachers should know effective methods and tools that can be used in distance education and be able to use them effectively. In addition, teachers should follow the innovations closely and seek ways to adapt these innovations to the education model."* Fatma stressed the importance of student follow-up in blended learning with the following statements: *"The teachers should follow the students in accessing the information and turning what they learned into a skill."* In addition, keeping strong communication with students, motivating them, teaching and guiding them to learn, and making preliminary preparations for the lessons were among the other duties and roles of teachers expressed by the participants. The subject of making preliminary preparations for the lessons includes the processes of preparing and sharing online activities with the help of educational technologies. One of the main duties and responsibilities of the teacher in blended learning is to produce or select the distance education content to be used in out-of-class processes, organize this content and share it with the students. There are many websites and smart device applications that can be used in blended learning. While one of the prospective social studies teachers stated no idea about this subject, the blended learning tools expressed by the other participants are shown in Figure 6.
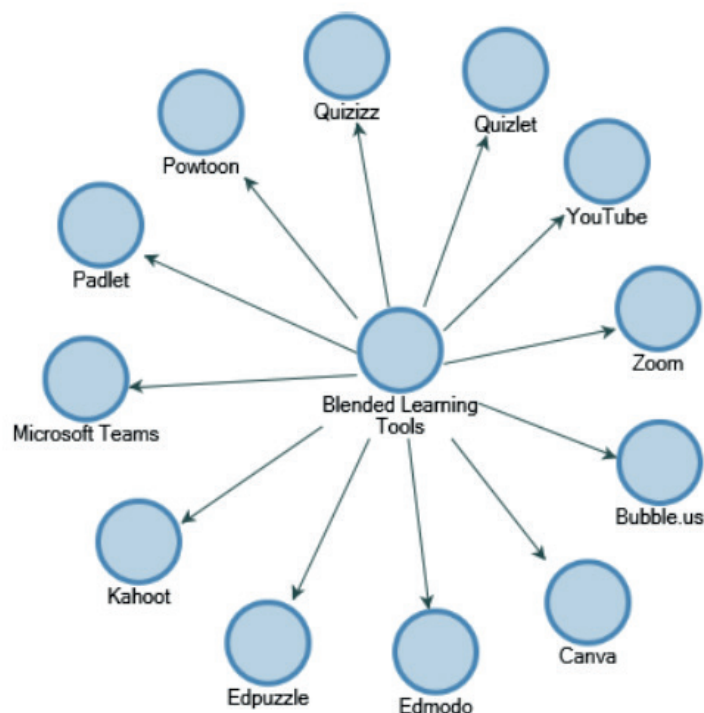
Figure 6. Blended Learning Tools

As seen in Figure 6, the participants mentioned many tools that can be used in blended learning. Among these tools, Kahoot, Zoom, Powtoon, Canva, and Bubble.us were the most frequently stated ones. Thus, it is seen that prospective teachers were aware of many blended learning tools.

In addition to teacher duties and roles, there are many tasks and roles that students are expected to fulfill in blended learning. Some of these roles were expressed by the participants. According to the prospective teachers, the tasks and roles of the students in blended learning are given in Figure 7.
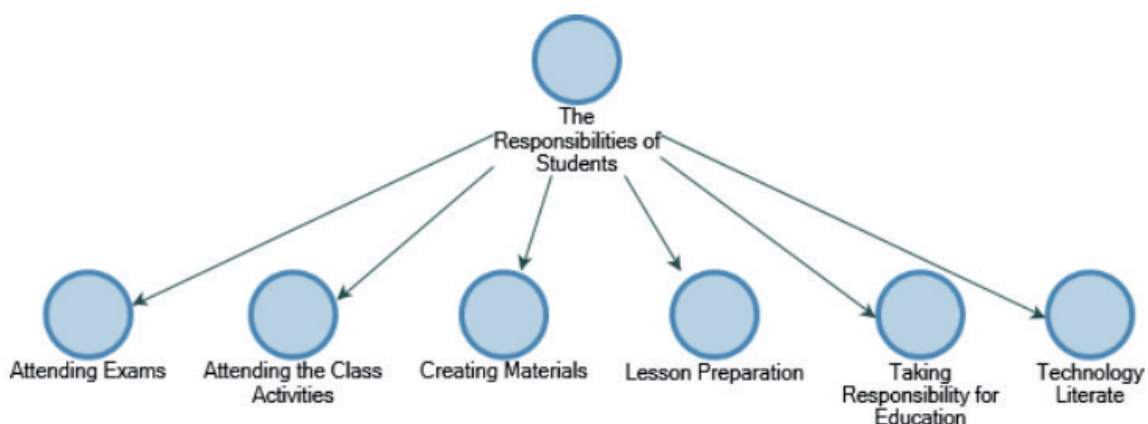

Figure 7. The Responsibilities of Students

As shown in Figure 7 above, preparing for the lesson and participating in the lesson were among the responsibilities that most of the prospective teachers said. Tayfun said that "*Students should come to class prepared*". Similarly, Fatma said, "*The students should come to class by studying*", and another participant Nuray stated, "*Students must follow the lessons in online education on time and attend without missing any lesson*". Some of the participants emphasized active participation in the lesson as one of the main responsibilities of the students in the classroom. Fatma, who thought that students should be active in the classroom, expressed

her views as follows: *"Participating in classroom activities, and participating in discussions and conversations on the subject of the lesson mean performing the tasks assigned by the teacher."* Another student responsibility frequently mentioned by the participants is related to the students taking their own educational responsibilities in blended learning. One of the participants, Kemal, stated that students should take their educational responsibilities as follows: *"The student should carefully follow both face-to-face and distance education, and be aware of his responsibilities by fulfilling the duties assigned to him. He should be able to take responsibility for his own learning, especially in cases where distance education is carried out."* In addition to these tasks, developing classroom materials, having technological knowledge and participating in exams were other student tasks that were stated by the participants.

Blended Learning in Social Studies Education

Prospective teachers were asked to present their opinions and suggestions on how they can benefit from blended learning in social studies education. In this regard, it was seen that four of the participants did not have any ideas about how blended learning could be used in the social studies course. On the other hand, the opinions presented by other participants pointed to the limited use of blended learning or the flipped classroom model in social studies education. Kemal, one of the participants, stated that there are some situations that require face-to-face education in the social studies course, and that blended learning can be used in a limited way. Kemal's views on this subject are as follows:

> *Topics that require material use and classroom interaction can be conducted face-to-face. For example, the lessons which require in-class discussions can be taught face-to-face, making the learning more effective. The tasks given to reinforce the learning or the preparation phase of the lessons can be carried out remotely, which provides us time-efficiency and efficiency.*

Another participant Fatma emphasized the use of the flipped classroom model with her explanation on the use of blended learning in social studies teaching. Fatma's views on this matter are as follows:

> *A topic related to the course is delivered to the students via the online environment. It is ensured that students study the subject and come prepared for the lesson. In the course, important parts of the subject can be discussed instead of giving a long lecture. Question-answer, discussion, etc. on the subject can be done with students. Various activities can be done in the course to ensure permanent learning and to reinforce the subject.*

Based on the opinions of the prospective teachers on this matter, it is possible to say that it is not fully understood how blended learning can be used in the social studies course. It is noteworthy to conclude that the prospective teachers who expressed their opinions on this matter also mentioned the use of blended learning in a limited way.

Evaluation of Blended Learning in Undergraduate Program

Prospective social studies teachers were asked to evaluate their undergraduate program and the courses they took in terms of learning about the skills and practices of blended learning. In this context, all of the prospective teachers stated that they found the courses and their undergraduate education insufficient. Fatma used the following statements on this matter: *"I think blended learning was not taught me in my undergraduate education."* Similarly, Tayfun expressed his incompetence especially about blended learning models as follows: *"Honestly, I know nothing about blended learning models."* Finally, Seda thought that although she had knowledge about the blended learning models, they did not have as much experience in blended learning as face-to-face education. Seda's remark on this matter is as follows: *"Although the blended learning models that we were told during our undergraduate period contributed to our development, I think that it is not more successful than the face-to-face education model."*

Although prospective social studies teachers presented various views on the definition of blended learning, its advantages and disadvantages, the roles of teachers and students in blended learning, and blended learning tools, their views on the association between blended learning models and blended learning and social studies were limited. In addition, they stated that the undergraduate education they received was insufficient to acquire necessary knowledge and practices related to blended learning.

DISCUSSIONS AND CONCLUSION

The views of prospective social studies teachers on blended learning were investigated and the findings of the current study are expected to contribute to social studies teacher education. The first finding of the present study is about how prospective teachers perceive blended learning. Half of the prospective teachers defined blended learning as a combination of face-to-face and distance education, which is similar to the findings in the literature, while the other half used the description of flipped classroom model while describing blended learning in a limited way. On the other hand, all 15 teachers in the study by Hensley (2020) expressed meaningful views on what blended learning is and how it is implemented in the classroom. This shows that half of the prospective teachers have insufficient knowledge about blended learning.

A similar finding was reached about the models of blended learning. There are four main models of blended learning (Christensen, Staker, & Horn, 2013). However, it was found that most of the prospective teachers do not have any knowledge about the models of blended learning. The fact that blended learning is not included in the course contents in the social studies teacher training program and that prospective teachers have not experienced blended learning practices in the courses they take may be the main reasons for this finding. However, Yilmaz and Malone (2020) concluded in their study that teacher candidates who have blended learning experience in their teacher education program have more positive views on this matter. Such a finding points to the necessity to include blended learning courses in social studies teacher education programs.

Another finding of the current study is related to the views of prospective teachers on the advantages and disadvantages of blended learning. According to the views of prospective teachers, blended learning has important advantages. The main advantages are that it strengthens teaching, provides opportunities for activities, gives students responsibility for learning, increases group work, class participation and interaction, and provides time efficiency. These findings are in line with the findings of Hensley (2020). Hensley (2020) found that students taking responsibility for their own learning, the opportunity to receive education in different places, the active participation of students in the lesson and reinforcement of learning are among the advantages of blended learning. Similarly, Akgunduz and Akincioglu (2017) concluded in their study that blended learning reinforces learning of secondary school students. On the other hand, a few of the prospective teachers stated the disadvantages of blended learning. These disadvantages can be listed as the problems of accessing technology, loss of motivation, and negligence. These findings of the current study coincide with the findings of many studies in the literature. For example, Yilmaz and Malone (2020) concluded in their study that students often experience problems in accessing the internet in a blended learning process and sometimes they feel lonely and unhappy. Similarly, Naidoo and Singh-Pillay (2020) revealed in their study that poor connection and lack of opportunities to access technological devices cause problems in blended learning. On the other hand, many studies have concluded that blended learning is effective in increasing student motivation (Horn & Staker, 2015; Kieschnick, 2017). This can be explained by the appropriate use of the right technological tools in blended learning.

The views on teacher and student roles in blended learning are another finding of the current study. Almost all of the participants stated that teachers and students have many duties and roles in the blended learning process. Participants gave examples of teacher responsibilities. In this context, it has been stated that teachers have duties and roles such as making preliminary preparations, following student learning, motivating students, organizing and guiding activities in the classroom, keeping communication and being competent in technology use. Similarly, all of the participants stressed many duties and responsibilities of the students such as preparing for the lesson, participating in the activities and developing materials in the activities, taking responsibility for their own learning and knowing how to use technology in the process of blended learning. These findings correspond to the findings in the literature. In the previous studies, similar duties, roles and responsibilities of teachers and students are emphasized (Saeed, 2020; Sorbie, 2015). Another role of the teacher is to prepare learning activities outside the classroom by using educational technologies. In this context, teachers have responsibilities such as finding and choosing the right educational technologies. In parallel with the development of information technologies in education, there are many websites and tools that can be used to communicate with students, to follow student learning, to coordinate students, and to conduct online education activities in blended learning process. With the widespread use of smart devices, the number of applications used for educational services is increasing consistently. According to

another finding of this study, prospective teachers gave many examples of tools that can be used in a blended learning. When the tools that the participants suggested are examined, it is seen that these tools are used for content creation, content sharing and live lessons. In support of this finding, Raymond (2019) revealed with the views of teachers in his study that there are many technological tools that can be used in education. Therefore, it can be concluded that Information Technologies in Social Studies courses have an important impact on the formation of students' views on this matter. Because when the contents of these courses are examined, it is seen that social media tools, computer, phone and smart device applications that can be used in social studies education are explained (YOK, 2018).

Another finding of the current study is the views of prospective teachers on blended learning in social studies education. The use of blended learning models in social studies education brings many educational advantages (Erdogan, 2018). But it was concluded that almost all of the participants did not have any knowledge about how to use blended learning in social studies education. This situation can be explained by the absence of any course in the social studies teacher training program in which blended learning and the tools of blended learning are taught. In addition, the fact that the pre-service teachers in the last year of the social studies undergraduate program have not experienced blended learning in the courses they take explains this situation. On the other hand, Hensley (2020) emphasized the necessity and importance of in-service training on blended learning as a result of the views of teachers.

Last finding of the study explains the reason of lack of knowledge in participants about blended learning. Because, all of the prospective teachers find the undergraduate education they have received insufficient in terms of gaining knowledge, skills and practices related to blended learning. The insufficient knowledge, skills and practices related to blended learning in undergraduate education cause prospective teachers to have difficulty in establishing a connection between social studies education and blended learning. In a systematic review on blended learning, Atmacasoy and Aksu (2017) emphasized that blended learning is not sufficiently included in teacher education programs in Turkiye. This study supports the result reached in the research.

It is possible to offer some recommendations in line with the results of the study. Updating the social studies teacher training program to include blended learning, conducting practices on different models of blended learning in order to increase the experience of prospective teachers, and examining the orientations of teacher candidates in different universities with a large sample group constitute the implications of the current study.

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