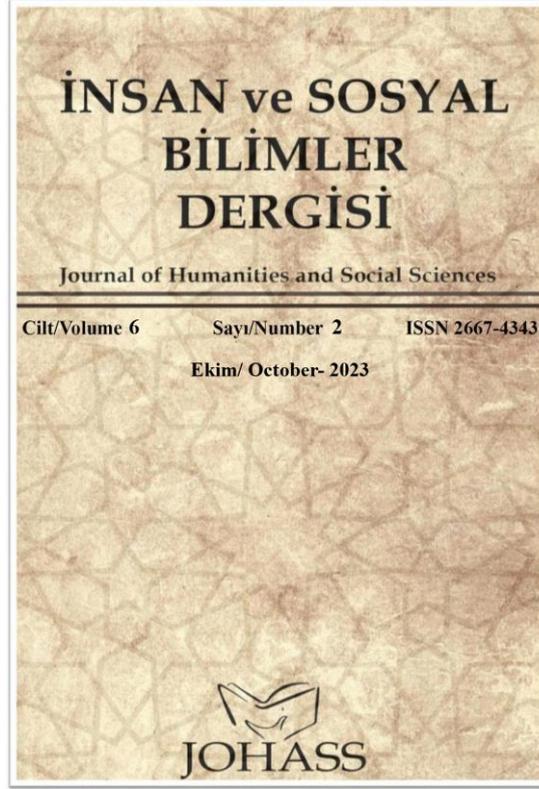


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**Teacher Opinions on the Problems Encountered in Teaching History
Subjects in Social Studies Courses**

Şahin ORUÇ¹

*Yildiz Technical University, Faculty of
Education, Social Studies Education*

Prof. Dr.

sahinoruc44@hotmail.com

Orcid ID: 0000-0001-8666-3654

Mert Mustafa AK²

*Cukurova University, Faculty of Education,
Social Studies EducationDr.*

Res. Asst.

mertak213@gmail.com

Orcid ID: 0000-0002-5593-405X

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Teacher Opinions on the Problems Encountered in Teaching History Subjects in Social Studies Courses

Şahin ORUÇ¹

Yildiz Technical University, Faculty of Education, Social Studies Education

Mert Mustafa AK²

Cukurova University, Faculty of Education, Social Studies Education

Abstract

The first impression of history acquired by students who encounter history subjects for the first time in the "Culture and Heritage" learning area of the social studies course in schools is a critical point for their view of history for the rest of their educational life. The aim of the research, which is designed with this motivation, is to reveal the problems experienced in the teaching of history subjects in primary social studies courses from the perspective of teachers. The study group of the study consists of 27 social studies teachers working in 21 different secondary schools in Adana, Gaziantep, Şanlıurfa, Hatay and Trabzon provinces of Turkey. The study is designed in the case study pattern from qualitative research methods. In the study, the semi-structured interview form developed by the researcher was used as a data collection tool through Google Forms. The data obtained in the study were subjected to descriptive analysis; QDA Miner 5 qualitative data analysis program was used for this. According to the findings of the research, social studies teachers face problems such as the fact that the curriculum is very intense, the course hours are insufficient, the students do not show interest in the course, the history subjects are boring and irrelevant to the present, the students cannot perceive abstract subjects and concepts and the physical facilities of the schools are insufficient. In the solution of such problems, teachers and students, as well as especially the program makers who develop the curriculum, have a great responsibility.

Keywords: Social studies, education, history teaching, problems in history teaching, teacher opinions

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¹ Corresponding author:

Prof. Dr.

sahinoruc44@hotmail.com

Orcid ID: 0000-0001-8666-3654

² *Res. Asst.*

mertak213@gmail.com

Orcid ID: 0000-0002-5593-405X

Introduction

History; It helps us to understand our present identity by revealing political, cultural, economic, scientific and social changes together with cause and effect. In other words, history teaches from the past. Historians have different ideas about why history teaching is important. Some historians believe that the most important reason for teaching history is to make young people proud of their nation's past. For others, it is much more important to "understand the nature of the discipline of history," which includes understanding what we know about the past, how we know it, and why we make different interpretations of the same events (Duraisingh, 2008). From a broad perspective, the purpose of history teaching is to enable students to learn about history, to help them understand the importance of history, and to make them aware of the impact of historical events on the present. But the problems teachers face in teaching history can make it difficult for them to achieve these goals. That's why it's important to lay out how teachers teach history and what kind of problems they have when teaching. Teaching history with the wrong strategies can cause students to develop a negative attitude towards a history lesson or to shuffle the pages of a history book just to succeed in an exam. Such a situation can also eliminate the sense of curiosity in students about history, which should always be kept alive. However, students' interest and curiosity about history is one of the factors that can determine the direction of future history teaching.

To teach students how to handle history, the teachers themselves must first know this. For this reason, teachers need to have a deep knowledge of what history is and how historical inquiry can be managed. Teacher educators also face many challenges in teaching prospective teachers educational approaches that will increase students' historical thinking skills. In this respect, identifying the problems experienced in history teaching may pave the way for updating teacher training programs as it will reveal the nature of teacher education programs in this regard (Hover and Yeager, 2004).

Teaching history subjects helps students understand past events and societies. Students are introduced to history subjects for the first time in social studies classes. According to MEB (2018), one of the specific aims of the social studies course curriculum is: "To ensure that students understand the basic elements and processes that make up Turkish culture and history and accept that the cultural heritage that creates national consciousness should be protected and developed." For this purpose, history subjects are taught in social studies courses through the "Culture and Heritage" learning area. This learning area: "Aims to create

a national consciousness that will ensure the protection and development of culture, based on the basic elements that make up Turkish culture (MEB, 2018). Teaching these subjects, which are included in the content of the social studies course, in a correctly constructed system by purifying them from their problems in the light of the aims of social studies teaching, will pave the way for students to grow up as responsible citizens who have a national consciousness and protect their cultural heritage.

On the other hand, teaching history with the wrong methods and strategies in social studies classes, where students are introduced to history subjects for the first time, may cause students to have wrong understandings about the past. This can influence students' future decisions and thoughts. An incorrectly constructed history teaching can cause students to develop prejudice and discrimination against certain groups or societies. Teaching history from just one perspective, or presenting only the perspective of a group of people, can prevent students from developing a broad worldview. History helps people learn from mistakes they have made in the past. However, problems arising from both the teacher and the learner can cause students to turn into unconscious citizens who repeat the same mistakes without being aware of the mistakes of the past and may lead to an increase in future social problems. Because history is a very important part of the cultural heritage of a country or society.

In the study by Oliveira (2008) in which he consulted the opinions of history teachers in California, teachers generally expressed the problems experienced in history teaching under 3 headings. The first of these is that history courses have a lower status than other courses in schools and are not seen as important as other courses. It is thought that history lessons are taking a backseat as students focus more on reading skills or mathematics lessons. According to teachers, this situation is a factor that makes it difficult for students to be interested in and respect history, and is also the premise of the students' limited skills and prior knowledge, which is seen as the second main problem. According to teachers, students are not interested enough in history and do not read books about history. The third problem arises from the high demands of the history curriculum. Although teachers know the importance of reading, writing and analysis skills in history teaching, many things required by the curriculum, limited time and limitations in students' readiness make teaching these skills difficult.

The difficulty students have in grasping historical significance is a fundamental problem in history teaching. One thing that many history teachers must accept is the belief that some students have that the past has nothing to do with their current lives. This problem becomes more evident as the subject told in history goes back in time, that is, as it moves

away from the present. To solve this, students need to believe that they cannot escape the evidence and past influences surrounding their lives; They need to be convinced that the past has an important role in acquiring the legal rights and responsibilities they have in today's society, which are directly related to past events (Hunt, 2000).

When the relevant literature is examined, there are many researches that deal with the problems in history teaching. According to Yıldız (2003), the insufficient course hours in order to convey the subjects and achievements of the course to the students, the problems arising from the teaching methods and the problems arising from the quality of the textbooks are the main problems of history teaching. In another research that focuses on the subject, the most basic problems in history teaching are; problems arising from the curriculum, problems arising from teachers, problems arising from textbooks and problems arising from the educational environment (Hali, 2014). In textbooks, anachronism errors are made especially for the reasons such as the fact that the authors of the books use the language of the period when describing historical events and that they attribute the interpretations, concepts and perspectives of themselves and the present to historical figures (Öztürk, 2011). Some student-related problems can also make history teaching difficult. As a matter of fact, Akbaba et al. (2014) concluded in their research that although the attitudes of the students towards history lessons were positive, they did not have enough information and the interest in the course was low. In Göksu (2020)'s study, in which he consulted the opinions of social studies teachers in the teaching of history subjects, teachers stated that students had prejudices towards history lessons and therefore did not show enough interest in history lessons. Ata and Keçe (2014), in their study with social studies teachers, stated that students' priority in social studies lessons is to pass the exam, and teachers teach lessons with the concern of being able to complete their busy curriculum on time.

Determining the source of these problems in teaching history subjects may enable us to revise and improve our history teaching with the right strategies and methods. Situations such as renewed curriculum, changing social structure and therefore changing student profile, extraordinary situations such as pandemics or natural disasters, and disruptions in the education process may have had different reflections on history teaching and may have led to new problems. For this reason, it is considered important to determine what problems social studies teachers, who laid the foundation of historical awareness in primary school students, encounter in teaching history subjects.

In this context, the aim of the study is to reveal the current problems in teaching history subjects from the perspective of social studies teachers teaching history subjects in schools and to take a closer look at new problems that we may not be aware of. In line with this main purpose, the following questions constitute the sub-problems of the research:

1. According to the opinions of social studies teachers, what are the problems arising from the planning of the teaching process in teaching history subjects?
2. According to the opinions of social studies teachers, what are the problems experienced during the implementation of the teaching process in teaching history subjects?
3. According to the opinions of social studies teachers, what are the roles of teachers and students in the process of teaching history subjects? The questions constitute the sub-problems of the research.

The difference of this study from similar studies in terms of subject is that the more specific problem of history teaching in social studies teaching is included with the teacher's opinion. It is hoped that this study will contribute to the field.

Method

Model

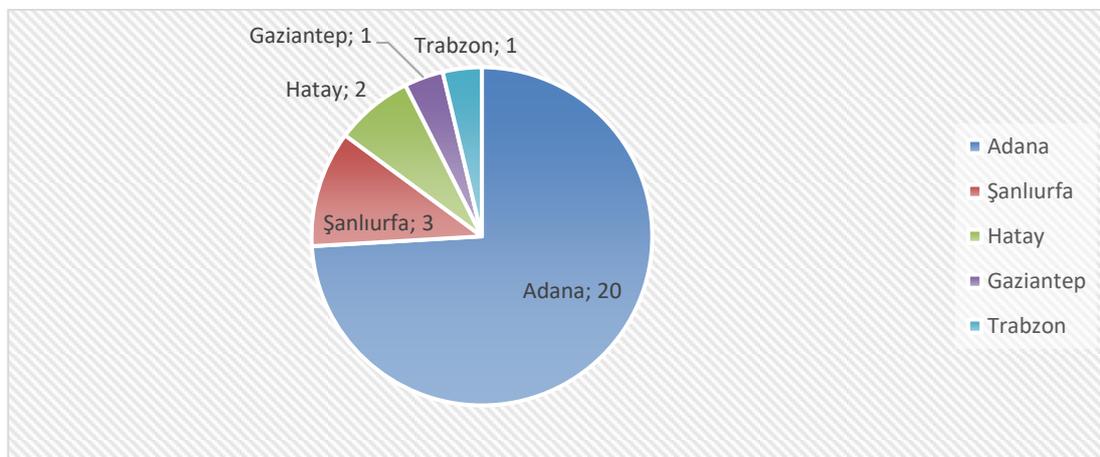
The study was designed in a case study pattern, one of the qualitative research methods. Case studies; It is an in-depth investigation of one or several situations. To put it differently, in case studies, factors related to a situation are investigated from a holistic perspective (Yıldırım and Şimşek, 2016). In the study, the case study design was preferred because it was desired to consult the opinions of social studies teachers about the problems experienced in teaching history subjects.

Study Group

The study group consists of 27 social studies teachers working in 21 different secondary schools in Adana, Gaziantep, Şanlıurfa, Hatay and Trabzon provinces of Turkey. The descriptive statistics for the working group are as follows.

Figure 1

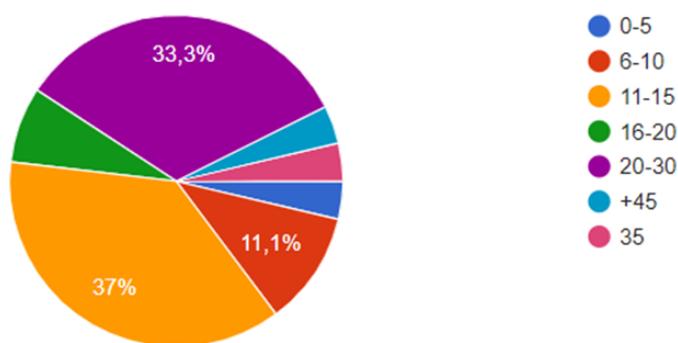
Distribution of The Study Group according to the Provinces Where They Continue Their Professions



As can be seen in Figure 1, 20 out of the 27 social studies teachers in the study group work in Adana, 3 in Şanlıurfa, 2 in Hatay, 1 in Gaziantep and 1 in Trabzon.

Figure 2

Study Group's Tenure in the Profession

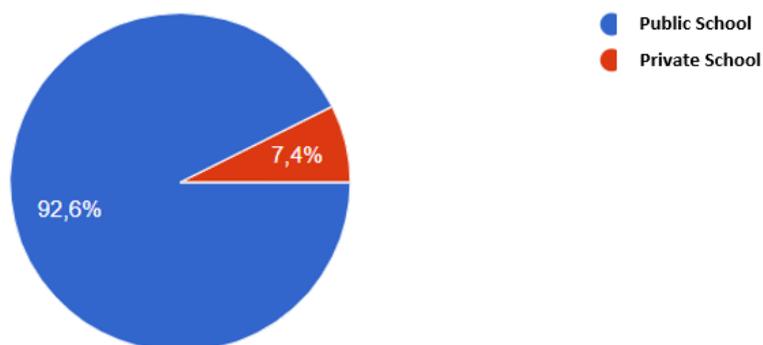


When Figure 1 is examined, 37% of the social studies teachers who constitute the study group of the research are in the 11-15th grades in the profession. 33% have been

teaching for more than 20 years. It can be said that the majority of social studies teachers whose opinions were consulted within the scope of the research are experienced teachers.

Figure 3

Status of the Schools Where the Study Group Works



When Figure 2 is examined, it is seen that 92.6% of the 27 social studies teachers whose opinions were consulted within the scope of the study worked in a public secondary school and 7.4% in a private institution.

Data Collection Tools

In the study, a semi-structured interview form developed by the researcher was used as a data collection tool to reveal the problems experienced by social studies teachers in teaching history subjects in their courses. Direct quotations were included in the study to increase the validity and reliability of the data collection tool. For the content validity of the interview form, the opinions of a field expert and a social studies teacher were consulted. The interview form, prepared in line with expert opinions, took its final form with 8 questions. The questions in the interview form consisting of 8 questions and the research sub-problems they are related to are given in Table 1.

Table 1

Research Sub-Problems and Related Items in the Interview Form

Research Sub-Problems	Related Items in the Interview Form
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According to the social studies teachers, what are the problems arising from the planning of the teaching process in the teaching of history subjects?

According to the opinions of social studies teachers, what are the problems experienced during the implementation of the teaching process in teaching history subjects?

According to the opinions of social studies teachers, what are the roles of teachers and students in the process of teaching history subjects?

2. Which subjects do you think are more important in history teaching? Why?

3. Which history topics do your students have difficulty in learning? In your opinion, what are the reasons why your students have difficulty in learning these subjects?

8. How do you think the curriculum affects the teaching of history subjects?

1. What problems do you encounter when teaching history subjects? What do you think can be done to solve these problems?

4. What materials do you use when teaching history subjects? How effective do you think these materials are?

5. What strategies, methods and techniques do you use when teaching history subjects? What would you like to say about the effectiveness of the methods you use?

6. What do you think about the role of teachers in teaching history?

7. What do you think about the role of students in teaching history?

As can be seen in Table 1, items 2, 3 and 8 in the 8-question semi-structured interview form address the first sub-problem of the research; 1, 4 and 5 address the second sub-problem of the research; 6 and 7 are related to the third sub-problem of the research.

Collection of Data and Analysis

Before the interviews, an application was made to the Cukurova University Ethics Committee and a document showing the ethical appropriateness of the research (decision no. 12 dated 05.09.2023) was obtained. During the data collection process in the study; First, the items in the developed semi-structured interview form were transferred to Google Forms. Since the busy schedule of the social studies teachers who made up the study group limited the opportunity for face-to-face meetings, the data collection process was progressed through Google Forms. After recording the responses of the entire study group, the data obtained was subjected to descriptive analysis in the QDA Miner 5 qualitative data analysis program. As a result of the descriptive analysis, the data grouped under 3 different themes: "planning of the teaching process", "implementation of the teaching process" and "roles in the teaching process".

Compliance with Ethical Standards

The Ethics Committee of Çukurova University was applied for a document showing the ethical suitability of the study. The document showing that the study was ethically appropriate (decision dated 28.08.2023 and numbered E-74009925-604.01.02-788688) was received.

Findings

Data obtained from the opinions of social studies teachers in the study presented respectively under the subheadings of “planning the teaching process”, “implementation of the teaching process” and “roles in the teaching process”.

Findings Regarding “Planning the Teaching Process”

Table 2

Teacher Opinions on Planning the Teaching Process

Theme	Category	Codes	Frequency
PLANNING THE TEACHING PROCESS	Program design	Intensive curriculum	13
		Lack of chronological integrity	7
		Rote based system	7
		Inadequate curriculum	5
		Few course hours	5
		Curriculum without alternatives	3
		Exam-oriented system	2
		Lack of quality of textbooks	2
		Non-transparent curriculum	1
		Student centered	1
	Difficult topics	Ottoman history	10
		Ancient history	4
		History of the Turkish Republic	4
		Treaties	2
		Political history	1
		Central Asian Turkish history	1
		Economic history	1
		Examples of failure	1
	Important topics	History of Turkish Revolution	13
		Holistic history	7
		National culture	6
		Pre-Islamic Turkish history	2
		Social life	1
		Ottoman Empire	1
		Teaching of concepts	1
		Linked to today	1
	Course content	Abstract topics and concepts	18
		Irrelevant to daily life	10
Boring		5	
Similar topics and concepts		2	

Table 2 contains categories and codes related to the problems experienced by social studies teachers in connection with the planning of the teaching process in the teaching of

history subjects. Under the category of curriculum design, teachers mostly talked about problems such as "intensive curriculum (13)", "lack of chronological integrity (7)", "rote based system (7)", "inadequate curriculum (5)" and "few course hours (5)". Regarding such problems, T17: "The elaboration of some subjects above the learning levels of the students, the disconnects in the transitions between the subjects, the lack of attention to chronology, the prejudice that the students are verbal and difficult against the course they brought from previous years and the thought that I can not do it cause difficulties in teaching. Tailoring topics to student levels; solutions such as not drowning students with details such as history and name, and adding simple and instructive-entertaining activities to books can be produced." Some of the other problems mentioned by teachers are that our education system is exam-oriented, textbooks are considered insufficient, changes made to the program are not transparent, and teachers' involvement in the process is inadequate and student-centered. The views expressed here, especially about the lack of alternatives to the curriculum, are remarkable and basically stem from the fact that Syrian students cannot be integrated into the teaching process. T23 on this subject: "Syrian students cannot find anything of themselves because they are not included in their historical program. Therefore, the lessons do not interest them."

Social studies teachers stated that they had difficulty in teaching subjects such as "Ottoman history (10)", "ancient history (4)", " history of the Turkish Republic (4)". In addition to these subjects, there are problems in the teaching of subjects such as treaties (2), political history (1), Central Asian Turkish history (1), economic history (1) and failure examples (1). T22: "My students have difficulty in learning Ottoman history due to reasons such as having rote knowledge and being unfamiliar with old concepts." while T17's opinion is as follows: "Students think that they should memorize this information especially on subjects containing a lot of information, such as the reforms made during the Ottoman Empire, the activities during the sultans' period, the developments in Europe, the congress items in the preparation period of the National Struggle and the ancient civilizations, and they think that they should memorize this information in the preliminary they are being judgmental." T13: "Students often don't want to learn about the periods in our history when we failed. When it comes to these issues, students are unhappy." underlines a different point.

Teachers stated that they considered subjects such as "History of Turkish Revolution (13)", "National Culture (6)", "Pre-Islamic Turkish History (2)" to be the most important in relation to history. 7 social studies teachers stated that history is holistic and therefore all

subjects are important. T12: "Actually, all subjects are important to me, but since today's system is exam-oriented, a curriculum for exams is usually applied. For this reason, the history of the Revolution is predominantly the subjects."

Teachers also reported that they had various problems with the content of the history lesson or the way it was perceived by the students. Codes such as "abstract topics and concepts (18)", "irrelevant to daily life (10)", "boring (5)", "similar topics and concepts (2)" come to the fore at this point. T14 said: "History subjects seem abstract, heavy and boring to students. They also say that history is in the past and is unnecessary. It may be a good idea to use films and documentaries as a solution to this problem, but the best thing would be to take it to historical places if possible. We need to ensure that students establish a good chronological relationship and do not see events in history as independent events." T19 said: "It is a problem to confuse historical subjects because they are similar (wars, treaties). By using concept maps and diagrams that are prepared appropriately for the classroom environment, it is possible to reduce students' confusion of topics."

Findings Regarding “Implementation of the Teaching Process”

Table 3

Teacher Opinions Regarding the Implementation of the Teaching Process

Theme	Category	Codes	Frequency
IMPLEMENTATION OF THE TEACHING PROCESS	Strategy, Methods and Techniques	Narration	18
		Question and answer	16
		Drama	9
		Game	6
		Discussion	5
		Storytelling	4
		Research	3
		Trip	3
		Presentation	2
		Embodiment	2
		Brain storming	1
		Case study	1
		From near to far	1
		Individual study	1
		Invention	1
	Station	1	
	Materials	Map	14
		Presentation	14
		Smart board	11

	Textbook	6
	Documentary	5
	Movie	4
	Video	4
	Sourcebooks	4
	Eba activities	3
	Picture	3
	Animation	3
	Social studies websites	2
	Photograph	1
	Gain tests	1
	Tutorial songs	1
	Social media	1
	Literary works	1
	Atlas	1
Extracurricular factors	Social media	2
	Physical facilities	2

Table 3 shows the way social studies teachers follow in implementing the teaching process in teaching history subjects. Accordingly, the strategies, methods and techniques that teachers use most when teaching history subjects are: "narration (18)", "question-answer (16)", "drama (9)", "game (6)", "discussion (5)" and "storytelling (4)". T4: "I apply narrative, question-answer and discussion methods according to the characteristics of the subject. Sometimes, in appropriate places, I can show short clips from films so that the student can understand the lifestyle and traditions of that period. "Sometimes I give drama assignments to students who want to show their theater talent." While T21 stated: "I use methods and techniques such as question-answer, explanation and discussion, but so far the effect I expected has not been achieved. "Permanent learning can be achieved if historical site visits are made." is of the opinion. Teachers stated that they mostly used materials such as "map (14)", "presentation (14)", "smart board (11)", "textbook (6)" and "documentary (5)" in their lessons. Commenting on the subject, T12 said: "We usually use maps and smart boards. I think both of them are preferred because they make our job easier rather than their efficiency. "Visuals and presentations are useful for concretization." says. T17 said: "Maps, slides, questions and answers, videos, educational songs, games, activities. It increases interest in the lesson. However, some issues still remain abstract." He emphasizes that even the different materials used in lessons are not effective in solving the problems related to abstract subjects and concepts. Although extracurricular factors, which are one of the points that teachers cannot control very much in the implementation part of the teaching process, are not mentioned much, codes such as "social media (2)" and "physical facilities (2)" have

emerged. T8: “It may seem interesting, but false and inaccurate information provided by publications with unknown sources on social media causes confusion among students.” While drawing attention to social media, T18 said: “Frankly, I cannot use a lot of materials in lessons, the resources do not allow it. Internet in schools etc. "The lack of resources makes our job difficult." With his statement, he emphasizes the inadequacy of the physical capacities of schools.

Findings Regarding “Roles in the Teaching Process”

Table 4

Teacher Opinions about Roles in the Teaching Process

Theme	Category	Codes	Frequency
ROLES IN THE TEACHING PROCESS	Role of teachers	Interesting	14
		Guiding	10
		Productive	3
		Active	2
		Dynamic	2
		Equipped	2
		Objective	1
	Student profile	Motivation	15
		Readiness	10
		Lack of skills	4
		Passive	4
		Curious	3
		Prejudiced	2
		Lack of self-confidence	1
Lack of knowledge	1		

Table 4 contains codes for how social studies teachers evaluate their own roles in the teaching process and the student profile. In this direction, teachers think that a teacher should be more "interesting (14)" and "guiding (10)" in the teaching process. T4: "The teacher is directly involved in the teaching process. Since it is the teacher who directs and directs the lesson, it either makes them love or hate." while T6 expresses the opinion as follows: "The teacher is the determining factor in the learning of history in terms of gathering the students' interests or managing their existing curiosity." Although there are not many of them, codes such as "productive (3)", "active (2)", "dynamic (2)", "equipped (2)" and "objective (1)" have also appeared in this section. T8: "I find it important that the teacher is equipped with the field

and that the student answers the questions in a way that can show the sources." emphasizes teacher competence.

According to teachers, students experience a serious lack of "motivation (15)" in the teaching process and are not at a sufficient level of "readiness (10)". T24 said: "The most important element in every lesson and activity is the student. If the student is not willing, thinks about other things in the lesson and does not show interest in the lesson, you will not succeed. There is irresponsible behavior in many of today's students. A small number of students have an academic success goal and effort in this direction." while pointing out the low motivation of the students, T3 said: "The readiness levels of the students and their interest in the course have dropped a lot, especially with the pandemic and the earthquake. This should be raised." and emphasized the external factors that affect student motivation, especially in the recent period. Apart from motivation and readiness, negative codes such as "lack of skills (4)", "passive (4)", "prejudiced (2)", "lack of self-confidence (1)" and "lack of knowledge (1)" appear to be the only positive codes in this section. T17: "If there are prejudices that students have acquired before the course, it is difficult to break. If the student does not repeat regularly, does not pay attention, does not interest in what is said, it is forgotten and not permanent by staying in the lesson. I think the main character is the student," he said, noting the difficulty of breaking students' prejudices against history subjects. T12 said: "If the students cannot be active in this process, they will disappear in a deflated state, tightly in the process. They definitely need to be activated and participate in the flow. As the interest and curiosity of the student increases, the enthusiasm in the teacher will also be strengthened." and mentioned the positive effect of the active student on the teacher.

Discussion and Results

As a result of this study, which aims to reveal the problems faced by social studies teachers in the teaching of history subjects and to offer possible solutions for the solution of these problems, it has been revealed that there are various problems in the planning of the teaching process and the implementation of this process. The teachers whose opinions were consulted in the research mentioned that the class hours were very low, especially in contrast to the intensive curriculum. In addition, teachers mentioned problems such as the fact that the system is based on memorization, the lack of chronological integrity between the subjects makes it difficult for students to learn, the textbooks are inadequate and their opinions are not

consulted in the change processes related to the program. These problems mentioned by the teachers are similar to the researches in the relevant literature. Yıldız (2003) presents the main problems in history teaching; insufficient course hours, the classicism of the methods used in education, the fact that the textbooks do not comply with the standards accepted in the world and the understanding of rote education.

The fact that social studies course hours are insufficient and the importance of the course lags behind other courses is a highly debated issue in the international literature. Especially the modern debate about primary school social studies and history teaching is about whether history and social studies teaching is necessary, rather than what should be taught (Keirn, 2018). While there has been a greater focus on reading and mathematics skills, especially since 2001, with the influence of the "No Child Should Be Left Uneducated" law in the USA, there has been a serious decrease in the course time allocated for history and social studies in the primary education program. The main reason for this situation is that teachers are forced to focus on reading and linguistics in order to increase students' test scores, and as a result, the importance of history and social studies is reduced (Van Sledright, Reddy, & Walsh, 2012). Morton and Dalton (2007), who revealed this situation statistically, stated that the time allocated to social studies lessons per week in primary public schools in the USA was 3 hours in the mid-90s, and this time decreased to 2.5 hours in the mid-2000s. The significant decrease in the time allocated to the social studies course and the lowering of the importance of the course lead to the state withdrawing its investment resources from this field and not allocating sufficient funds and resources for teacher training. According to An (2016), this invisibility of social studies in primary teacher education may cause investment resources to focus on other areas and stay away from social studies. As a matter of fact, primary school social studies education is not funded as much as other fields in the USA and has not even been included in the state budget since 2012 (Perrotta, 2021).

Social studies teachers, whose opinions were consulted within the scope of the research, consider it important for their students to gain a national consciousness and learn about Turkish culture. However, teachers; He has difficulty in teaching subjects such as "Ottoman History", "Ancient History" and "History of the Turkish Republic" to his students. The main difficulty in teaching these subjects is that there is a very intense flow of information and students feel obliged to memorize this information. In parallel with the results of this research, Şimşek and Güler (2013) discuss the problems experienced in the teaching of Atatürk's Principles and the History of Turkish Revolution; insufficient course

hours, lack of resources, tools, equipment, intensity of the curriculum, students' lack of interest in the course, rote understanding of history, intensive flow of information towards official history, boring of the course and history information based on prejudice.

Göksu and Taşyürek (2023), in their study investigating the problems experienced by social studies teachers during the teaching process, stated that students experienced problems such as readiness, motivation and distraction in classes. Problems experienced by teachers in the study, such as insufficient lesson hours, difficulty in obtaining materials and inadequate physical conditions of schools, are parallel to the results obtained from this study. And also Şentürk, Coşkun Keskin, Ömer and Dursun (2021) stated that during the distance education process, social studies teachers experience problems such as indiscipline and lack of motivation caused by students, as well as problems arising from the curriculum such as insufficient class hours, insufficient information in the curriculum, and the inability to apply different methods and techniques.

Social studies teachers whose opinions were consulted in the study stated that students could not concretize history-related subjects, they thought that they would not be of any use in their daily lives, and that they found these subjects boring, and that this situation constituted a problem in teaching. In order to make the social studies curriculum more interesting for students, including different topics related to their daily lives may be a possible solution. In Perrotta (2021)'s research conducted with social studies teachers, participants; He pointed out that social studies teaching could be enriched with different subjects by including subjects such as women's history, civil rights and local history, which are not clearly included in the social studies curriculum. In addition, diversifying and enriching the teaching environment with different strategies, methods and techniques in order to concretize the subjects and make them interesting for students can be a solution. However, the same teachers whose opinions were consulted in the research stated that they mostly use lecture and question-answer methods, which we can see as classical methods, in their lessons. This may be a problem that may arise mainly from the inadequacy of teachers, but it may also be a problem arising from the inadequate physical conditions of schools and the short duration of lesson hours, making it impossible to apply different methods and techniques that can focus on the student in the classroom.

Teachers stated that they mostly used materials such as maps, presentations, smart boards, textbooks and documentaries in their lessons. Considering the problem experienced by students in concretizing abstract topics and concepts, it can be said that teachers try to

support their lessons especially with visual materials. However, they still have problems in making out-of-school learning environments part of the teaching process. Yılmaz (2010)'s research on the problems faced by history teachers in the teaching of Ancient History and Ancient Turkish History also suggests that teachers should make more use of out-of-school learning environments such as museums.

Teachers stated that students came to the classroom with various prejudices by obtaining information about history, especially from social media, of uncertain origin. Although social media tools, which have become an almost inseparable part of the lives of new generation students with the development of technology, offer various and rapid opportunities to access information, the lack of critical reading and media literacy skills of students may also cause them to be negatively affected by information pollution in social media. As a matter of fact, Okumuş (2019) sought the opinions of history teachers regarding the use of social media environments in history teaching; In addition to the positive opinions of teachers about social media such as providing information and communication opportunities without time and place limits, virtual socialization areas and rapid changes, they also conveyed their negative views such as causing information pollution and addiction. According to social studies teachers, the teacher should be more interesting and directive in order to convey the subjects related to history to the students in the best way. The fact that students find history subjects boring and need to be directed to the right resources shapes the teachers' thinking in this direction. According to the teachers, students' interest and motivation in history subjects are low and students are insufficient in terms of readiness. One of the remarkable results reached in the research is the problems arising from the inability to integrate Syrian students into the teaching process. According to teachers' opinions, especially topics related to Central Asian Turkish History do not attract the attention of Syrian students. This problem can be solved with individualized studies, but teachers need alternative activities that can be included in the curriculum. Yılmaz and Kaya (2011) describe the problems encountered in history teaching within the scope of social studies course; students' indifference to the lesson, contradictions in the curriculum, inadequacy of textbooks especially in terms of language and expression, examination-oriented system, physical inadequacies of schools and limited access to teaching materials and resources.

Despite the following years, developing technological opportunities and changing curriculum, it is seen that social studies teachers continue to have the same problems in teaching history subjects.

Recommendations

Within the scope of the research, social studies teachers mentioned that they experienced various problems in teaching history subjects. In order to solve these problems, taking into account the opinions of the teachers who are the implementers of the curriculum, a curriculum arrangement study where the course hours are increased, the flow of information is free, and the chronology is not ignored can be carried out by experts in the field. When our schools are adequately equipped in terms of physical conditions based on the principle of equal opportunity in education, most of the remaining work falls on teachers. Teachers should keep students' interest and curiosity alive by using different strategies, methods and techniques in their lessons, and should be able to raise historical awareness in their students by directing them to the right resources. Although teachers and students have a great responsibility to solve all these problems, the first step should be taken by the program makers, who can be described as the first link of the system.

Compliance with Ethical Standards

The Ethics Committee of Çukurova University was applied for a document showing the ethical suitability of the study. The document showing that the study was ethically appropriate (decision dated 28.08.2023 and numbered E-74009925-604.01.02-788688) was received.

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