Ways of Using Internet by Classroom Teachers in Social Studies Course

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Abstract

The aim of the study is to uncover how classroom teachers use Internet in social studies courses. In the study which was carried out to reveal how classroom teachers use internet in social studies courses a survey model was employed. The data were collected through a questionnaire which included open-ended items. The participants were 180 classroom teachers working at public schools in Afyon province. The data were collected through a survey questionnaire with five open-ended items. The data collected were examined using a descriptive analysis technique. The data were analysed in terms of the frequency of internet use by the participants in social studies courses, for which purposes they used it, frequently used internet-based sources and websites, and their views about the use of Internet for educational purposes. Half of the participants were found to sometimes use internet, while nearly half of them always employed it. They mostly employed internet to prepare the course. They often used it to find lecturing videos. They employed internet both in classroom and outside to find resources. It was found that the participants mostly visited the websites of "Morpa", "Eğitimhane" and "Vitamin" in the social studies course. In addition, they reported to visit various website for out of classroom use. For the class they mostly visited "Morpa" and for outside use they mostly visited "Vitamin" and "Eğitimhane". The findings showed that the participants sufficiently made use of Internet for social studies courses and that they basically used it for preparing the course content. It was also found that the frequently used internet-based sources were lecture videos, test items, study sheets, slides, documentaries, graphics and other visual materials. The findings also suggested that the participants had necessary skills to make use of Internet for educational purposes. The findings showed that in-servie training activities are needed for teachers to make them informed about the directly related internet-based applications and the problems in using internet in schools should be eliminated.

Keywords: social studies education, social studies courses, internet

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Sınıf Öğretmenlerinin Sosyal Bilgiler Dersinde İnternetten Yararlanma Biçimleri

Öz

Araştırmanın temel amacı sınıf öğretmenlerinin sosyal bilgiler dersinde internetten yararlanma biçimlerini belirlemektir. Sınıf öğretmenlerinin sosyal bilgiler dersinde internetten yararlanma biçimlerini belirlemeye yönelik olarak gerçekleştirilen bu araştırmada tarama modeli kullanılmıştır. Araştırmanın katılımcılarını 2014-2015 öğretim yılı bahar döneminde, Afyon ili merkezinde yer alan farklı sosyo-ekonomik düzeylerden 6 devlet ilkokulunda görev yapmakta olan 180 sınıf öğretmeni oluşturmaktadır. Bu araştırmada katılımcılardan 5 açık uçlu sorudan oluşan anket yoluyla veri toplanmıştır. Araştırma verilerinin çözümlenmesinde veri çözümleme yaklaşımlarından betimsel analiz kullanılmıştır. Araştırmaya katılan sınıf öğretmenlerin yarısı ara sıra, yarıya yakını her zaman sosyal bilgiler dersinde internetten yararlanmakta, interneti ders öncesinde derse hazırlık aşamasında kullanmaktadır. Araştırmaya katılan öğretmenler sosyal bilgiler dersinde internetten en çok konu anlatım videosu kullanmak amacıyla yararlanmaktadır. Araştırma kapsamındaki sınıf öğretmenleri Sosyal Bilgiler dersine kaynak oluşturmak üzere hem sınıf içinde hem de sınıf dışında internet siteleri ve yazılımlardan yararlanmaktadır. Öğretmenlerin sosyal bilgiler dersinde en fazla yararlandıkları internet siteleri ve yazılımlar Morpa, Eğitimhane ve Vitamin'dir. Araştırmadan elde edilen bulgular sınıf öğretmenlerinin sosyal bilgiler dersinde internetten yararlanma sıklıkları, internetten dersin hangi aşamalarında yararlandıkları, internetten en fazla ulaştıkları kaynak türleri, sınıf içinde ve sınıf dışında yararlandıkları internet siteleri ve yazılımlar, internet kaynaklarından yararlanmaya ilişkin özdeğerlendirmeleri temaları altında sunulmuştur. Buna göre sınıf öğretmenlerinin sosyal bilgiler dersi kapsamında genellikle internetten yararlandığı, interneti daha çok sosyal bilgiler dersine hazırlık yapmak amacıyla kullandıkları, sosyal bilgiler dersinde yararlanmak üzere internetten ulaştıkları kaynakların konu anlatım videosu, soru, test, çalışma yaprağı, slayt, belgesel, grafik gibi çeşitlilik gösterdiği söylenebilir. Yine elde edilen bulgulara göre öğretmenlerin sosyal bilgiler dersinde hem sınıf içinde hem de sınıf dışında çeşitli internet siteleri ve yazılımlardan yararlandıkları, öğretmenlerin sosyal bilgiler dersinde internet kaynaklarından yararlanabilecek düzeyde yeterliğe sahip olduğu söylenebilir.

Anahtar Sözcükler: sosyal bilgiler eğitimi, sosyal bilgiler dersi, internet

Introduction

Today children are frequently exposed to audio and visual stimuli through Internet, television, radio and mobile telephoes (Cuban, 2001). The world has been in a period called the information era and the world has became a global village as a result of advances in technology (Onasanya et. al., 2010). Given that Internet can be used by both teachers and students it is possible to provide them the data in the forms of text, audio and visuals which may be shared with various institutions and individuals. Internet covers numerous services that may serve as a information source. Through Internet people may communicate with one another, share their knowledge and have sources that can be employed in daily life and in educational contexts (Tavşancıl and Keser, 2002).

Computer technologies have experienced rapid development and have provided many valuable opportunited in teaching and education. These technologies in educational contexts have many advantages. For instance, students are given materials which allow for visual and audio learning in a short time. Such materials also make it possible to employ various learning strategies and improve student creativity (Yeşiltaş and Sönmez, 2009). Therefore, teachers may employ Internet for teaching and educational purposes and provide a wide range of documents, animations, experiments to children via Internet. Internet as an educational tool provides the individuals an opportunity to share and discuss their knowledge with others. Internet makes it possible for people with common interests to communicate one another and to look for new information about the topics they are interested in (Altun and Altun, 2000).

Savage and Armstrong (1996) argued that new technologies are also significant for social studies course as for other courses. In the context of social studies courses Internet allows for both teachers and students to collect, organize, interpret and reflect on information. One of the basic aims of the course is to contribute to children's socio-economic and political development and to help them in becoming a responsible citizen (Mezieobi, 2008). The use of Internet in social studies courses may complement this aim in that through Internet learners may follow news related to their country and to the world, think about solutions of problems experienced and be familiar with various institutions. Doppen (2004) analysed the use of Internet in social studies courses in terms of improving the skills of historical thinking and reasoning. It was found that the use of Internet for these goals created a significant difference and that students described the use of Internet in the course as interactive, and fun. Baloğlu and Uğurlu (2009) argued that Internet improves the competency of students regarding democracy, citizenship, environment and human rights due to its being a powerful communication and interaction tool. In addition, students become familiar with and informed about various cultures, management styles and environmental problems. The major gains from social studies courses are stated as follows: curiosity, asking questions, making observations and research, producing unique perspectives about the relationship between events and spaces in their immediate environment, having an ability to think independently, evaluating their decisions and holding the responsibility of their decisions, developing a vision about

future, updating their knowledge-base based on technological advances and expressing their views and feelings using different ways (MONE, 2006). In order to help students to achieve these and other related gains students should be given to use Internet in classroom and outside the school.

In social studies courses Internet can be used for different goals. For instance, internet can be used to inform parents about home assignments, study trips and other topics (Chapin, 2006); through on-line journals students may be informed about real life events (Harris, 1993). In addition, on-line library catalogues, databases and e-books can be used. Information about historical events can be gained from Internet (Martorella, 1998). Information about tourist attractions can be accessed through internet. More specifically, Google earth can be used to improve the student skills of spatial thinking (Patterson, 2007; Tecim, 2008). Chapin (2006) stated that in social studies courses Internet can be used to make research about weather conditions and climate of different regions and countries, to follow scientific studies, to develop multimedia projects, to assist individual learning students thorugh webquest practices and to make it possible for students to make online discovery via virtual trips and virtual musium visits. On the other hand, students can have information about non-governmental institutions and other related institutions through internet (Lee, 2000).

Internet is one of the proper sources to teach the content of social studies edutional programs. For instance, while teaching occupations websites of different occupational groups can be reviewed to have information. In addition through various Internet-based application such as e-consultancy students may communicate with members of different occupation groups about the potential solutions of social problems (Chapin, 2006). Students can also be informed by professionals about their occupations (Milson and Lacomb, 2001).

Students can also be informed about the lifestyles of different societies through Internet-based applications (Zarillo, 2004); they may develop on-line projects to make joint studies and research in relation to the topics covered in social studies courses, all of these activities significantly contribute to achieve the goals of the course (Chapin, 2006). Therefore, it can be stated that internet should be frequently used in social studies courses since it is closely related to the goals, skills, gains, values and content of the courses. However, as also argued by Ayas (2006) research (Berson, 1996; Doolittle ve Hicks, 2003; Rice ve Wilson, 1999; White, 1998; Whitworth ve Berson, 2003) shows that Internet is less used in social studies courses in contrast to other courses. Social studies course aims at produicng individuals who have thinking and creativity skills, are innovative, and can solve personal and social problems using a realistic perspective. Therefore, the use of Internet in social studies courses is necessary due to the fact that Internet make it possible to access and share information fast. Based on the significance of the use of Internet in social studies courses the aim of the study is to uncover how classroom teachers use Internet in social studies courses. In relation to this aim the study tries to answer the following research questions:

- How often do the classroom teachers use Internet in social studies courses?
- At which steps do the classroom teachers make use of Internet in social studies courses?
- Which Internet sources are frequently used by the classroom teachers in social studies courses?
- Which websites and software are frequenly employed by the classroom teachers in relation to social studies courses in classroom and outside the school?
- At which levels do the classroom teachers feel themselves efficient in using Internet-based sources in social studies courses?

Method

This section presents information about the design of the study, the partcipants, data collection tool and data analysis.

Design of the study

The study was designed following the scanning model. A survey questionnaire was administered to the participants. Questionnaires covers items about the research topic and allow for a researcher to collect data in a systemtical way (Kıncal, 2013).

Participants

The participants of the study were 180 classroom teachers working at eight public schools in Afyon during the spring semester of the school year of 2014-2015. Table 1 presents the demographical characteristics of the classroom teachers participated in the study.

Table 1

Demographical Characteristics of the Participants

Characteristics		f	%
Gender	Female	105	58,33
	Male	75	41,66
Professional experience	1-5 years	21	11,66
	6-10 years	37	20,55
	11-15 years	52	28,88
	16- + years	70	38,88
SES of the school	Lower SES	50	27,77
	Middle SES	70	38,88
	Higher SES	60	33,33

Data Collection Tool

The data of the study were collected through the administration of a survey questionnaire which included five open-ended items. It was reviewed by field

specialists to establish its validity. Based on the specialist feedbacks, the questionnaire was reorganized and finalized. In regard to the reliability of the questionnairs the items included were examined by the authors and a field specialist. Then the items which were mutually agreed and not mutually agreed were identified. In addition, for the reliability the formula developed by Miles and Huberman (1994) was employed and it was found to be $P = 92\%$, indicating that the questionnaire was sufficiently reliable to collect the data. The questionnaire is composed of two sections. The first section includes items about the demographic characteristics of the participants and the second one includes five open-ended items which deals with the ways to use Internet in social studies courses.

Data Analysis

The data obtained were investigated using the descriptive analysis. The process of data analysis was realized through four steps: developing a framework, the data analysis based on themes, description of the data and the interpretation of the data (Şahin, 2013). In short, the data were categorized based on the predetermined themes. The qualitative data were converted into numbers and the related frequency and percentages were identified. These are given in tables together with direct quotations from the statements of the participants.

Findings

The findings of the study are discussed in relation the the frequency of using Internet by classroom teachers in social studies courses, the use of Internet at different steps of the course, mostly used Internet-based sources, websites and software and the participants' self-evaluation about their comptency in using Internet in social studies courses. Table 2 presents the findings about the frequency of using Internet by classroom teachers in social studies courses.

Table 2

Frequency of Using Internet by Classroom Teachers in Social Studies Courses

Frequency of using Internet	f	%
Always	75	41.7
Rarely	90	50
Never	15	8.3

As can be seen in Table 2 the half of the participants reported that they rarely made use of Internet in social studies courses (%50). Nearly half of them reported that they always employed it in social studies courses (41,7%). However, there were also others who reported that they never used Internet in social studies courses (8,3%).

One of the participants, Aslı, who stated that she rarely used it, reported the following views:

"I rarelt use Internet in social studies course. Because computers in the school do not always work well. However, I try to search for course-related material on Internet whenever possible, although it is not so common."

One the participants, Barış, reported that he always use Internet in socal studies course as follows:

"In the class I have both projection and computer. I use preloaded websites in the course. I alsways employ Internet. I think as teachers we should keep up with technological advances and access knowledge fast."

Although the rate is lower, there were also others who reported that they never used Internet in social studies courses (8,3%). One of them, Osman, reported that:

"I do not use Internet. I do not support for the use of it by students. All necesary information is already covered in textbooks. So I do not need to use Internet."

Therefore, based on these findings we may argue that the majority of the classroom teachers sampled used Internet in social studies courses.

Table 3 shows the frequency of the Internet use by the participants based on the steps in a course.

Table 3

Frequency of the Internet Use by the Participants Based on the Steps in a Course

Steps	f	%
Preparation	80	44,44
Introduction	75	41,66
Development	35	19,44
Assessment	25	13,88
Other (i.e., briefing, home assignment, e-school)	20	11,11

Table 3 indicates that the participants mostly used Internet for the preparation step (44,44%). One of such participants, Nuray, stated that:

"If the topic to be delivered is production I make research the frequent products or common items imported on Internet. I also show graphics or tables downladed from Internet. Because there is no sufficient graphics and tables in textbooks."

A significant portion of the participants used it in the introduction part (41,66%). One of them, Aslı, reported that:

"I show pictures to the students in the introduction part to increase student interest."

Some of the participants used Internet for the step of development (19,44%). One of them was Emir who stated that:

> *"I use maps from Internet while teaching such topics as period of national struggle."*

It was also found that 13,88% of the participants used Internet for assessment purposes. One of them was Serhat. He stated that:

> *"I use study sheets and test items for student evaluation."*

There were also other participants who employed Internet for briefing, home assignment and e-school (11,11%).

It is seen that the participants mostly employed Internet for preparation, although they use it for the other steps.

Table 4 shows the frequency of the mostly used Internet based sources by the participants in social studies courses.

Table 4

Frequency of the Mostly Used Internet Based Sources by the Participants in Social Studies Courses

Internet-based sources	f	%
Lecturing videos	136	75,55
Test items, work sheets	120	66,66
Slides	80	44,44
Documentary	65	36,11
Graphics	42	23,33
Maps	18	10
Statistical data	15	8,33
Simulations	12	6,66
News	6	3,33
Photographs	4	2,22

Table 4 shows that the participants mostly used Internet in social studies courses to find a lecturing video (75,55%). One of them was Beyza who stated that:

> *"I use lecturing videos in the course. These videos are good for both me and students. Following the videos I ask questions about it."*

More than the half of the participants also used it for test items and work sheets (66,66%). One of such classroom teachers, Cem, stated that:

> *"I prepare tests after reviewing sample tests on Internet and I select some items from these tests. Internet is a great source for it. I addition, I find graphics from Internet and add them to tests."*

Teachers reported that they were employin slides during lecturing and that they developed these slides using Internet (44,44%). The views of Adem supported this use as follows:

> *"I am looking for related slides on Internet. Other teachers share their slides in related websites. I employ such slides whenever it is possible."*

It was also found that 36,11% of the participants used Internet to find related documentaries. One of such participants was Betül who maintained that:

> *"For instance, I show documentaries about such topics as the period of national struggle which which find from YouTube. Then I ask students to make comments on it."*

There were also participants who used Internet for finding graphics to be used in social studies courses (23,33%). One of them was Mesut who stated that:

> *"There are limited number of graphics in textbooks, but students should be taught to read graphics. Therefore, I find several graphics from Internet and use them in the course. For instance, graphics about the rate of rain in different regions can be used in related to appropriate units and topics."*

There were less participants who used Internet to find maps (10%). One of them stated that:

> *"For instance, in the topic there is a reference to a place unfamiliar to the students. I find a map from Internet to show this place."*

There were a few participants who used Internet to show statistical data (8,3%). The following statement exemplifies this as follows:

> *"I find statistical data about erosion and share it with my students."*

In order to use simulations in the course some participants employed (6,6%) as exemplified by the following quotation:

> *"If the topic is about natural disasters I employ slowed earthquake simulations or depictions from earthquakes in Japan. Following it we discuss possible steps to be taken during earthquakes."*

There were a few participants who employed Internet to exemplify current affairs (3,3%). One of the participants explained it as follows:

> *"I find related news stories about the topic at hand from Internet. I make use of them in the course. I think it helps students in relating the topic with current events."*

It was found that only 2,2% of the participants used Internet to find photographs which they make use of as teaching materials. One of the participants, Ayşe, stated that:

> *"While teaching about countries I find photographs about each country and present them to students. It is interesting to students to see these photographs."*

Therefore, it is safe to argue that the participants used Internet for a variety of sources which were used in social studies courses.

Table 5 indicates the frequency of the commonly used websites and software by the participants.

Table 5

Frequency of the Commonly Used Websites and Software by the Participants

Websites and software	In classroom		Outside	
	f	%	f	%
Morpa	90	50	75	41,66
Egitimhane	52	28,88	70	38,88
Vitamin	50	27,77	69	38,33
Okulistik	37	20,55	28	15,55
Sınıfogretmeniyizbiz.com	35	19,44	21	11,66
Sorubak.com	29	16,11	47	26,11
Eba	28	15,55	19	10,55
Dersimiz.com	25	13,88	17	9,44
İlkokuma.com	23	12,77	55	30,55
Leventyagmuroglu.com	19	10,55	50	27,77
Vikipedia	9	5	27	15
Ogretmen.com	-	-	9	5
Muratogretmen.com	-	-	7	3,88
Okuloncesi.org	-	-	5	2,77
Okuloncesipaylasimsitesi	-	-	5	2,77
İlkogretiminkalbi	-	-	4	2,22
Sadıkuygun.com	-	-	3	1,66
Testimiz.com	3	1,66	-	-

As can be seen in Table 5 participants visited a variety of websites to make use of them in class and outside the school. For social studies courses the participants were found to more commonly visit the following websites: Morpa, Eğitimhane and Vitamin. However, the variety of the websites visited by the participants outside the school was richer. More specifically they much more frequently visited "Morpa" for in social studies courses and "Vitami"n and "Eğitimhane" for outside the school.

The other websites visited by them for social studies courses were found to be "okulistik", "sınıfogretmeniyizbiz", "sorubak", "eba", "dersimiz", "ilkokuma", "leventyagmuroglu" and Turkish version of Wikipedia. The majority of the participants visited the websites "Morpa" and "vitamin" to find visuals, interactive videos, listening texts, solution of problems, experiment videos, and lecturing videos. They visited the websites "eğitimhane", "sınıfogretmeniyizbiz", "leventyagmuroglu" to find plans and work sheets, games, material photographs. They visited the websites "ilkokuma", "dersimiz", "sorubak" to find related test items and other questions to be used in the course. In order to find videos and presentations they

visited the "eba" website. They visited Turkish version of Wikipedia to access enecyclopedic information and texts.

For the outside use the participants reported that they entered the following websites: "Ogretmen.com", "Muratogretmen.com", "Okuloncesi.org", "Okuloncesipaylasimsitesi", "İlkogretiminkalbi", "Sadıkuygun.com", "Testimiz.com". They visited these websites to find information about the development of teaching materials (Okuloncesi.org, Okuloncesipaylasimsitesi), to find plans and official documents (Ogretmen.com, Muratogretmen.com and sadıkuygun.com) and to prepare home assignments and test items (testimiz.com).

In regard to the website "Morpa" Demet stated that:

> *"In Morpa Kampüs website there are experiments, interactive stories, listening and reading texts, sample examinations which I use. I visited it since it faciliates to access different and various teaching materials in a short time."*

Another participant who visited the website "Vitamin" for in class and outside use stated that:

> *"Vitamin's lecturing materials allos students to repeat their learning according to their pace and it improves student achievement. Using exam reports they see their incorrect answers and can identify their achievement level. In addition, these materials enrich the course in terms of activities, experiments, lecturing and visual materials."*

One of the participants who visited the website "Eğitimhane" outside the school, Tamer, explained it as follows:

> *"I visit the Eğitimhane website while preparing for the course to find activities, work sheets, presentations, test items. In addition, I visit it to write my official documents."*

Although the participants reported that they visited a variety of websites, they were not to visit and employ other potential websites for social studies courses such as google earth, google maps, CBS, webquest.

Table 6 indicates the frequency of the self-evaluation of the participants in regard to using Internet in social studies course.

Table 6

Frequency of the self-evaluation of the participants in regard to using Internet in social studies course

Levels of comptency	f	%
Insufficient	30	16,66
Moderately sufficient	40	22,22
Sufficient	70	38,88
Very sufficient	40	22,22

Table 6 shows that the majority of the classroom teachers regarded themselves as sufficiently competent in using Internet in social studies courses (%38,88). One of these participants, Ferhat, stated that:

> *"In social studies courses I employ Internet to find maps, visuals, videos, news stories. I use them to improve student interest. So I can say that I am capable of using Internet. However, I may be better at using Internet."*

It was found that the rate of the participants who considered themselves as either moderately sufficient or insufficient was the same (each 22,22%). One the participants who regarded themselves as insufficient, Alp reported the following:

> *"I do not use Internet on my mobile phone. I use only e-school when it is necessary. I do not have any idea about how I can use Internet specifically for social studies courses."*

One of the participants who considered themselves to have moderate-level competency in using Internet in social studies courses, Ferhat, stated that:

> *"I can say that I consider myself to have moderate-level competency in using Internet in social studies courses. I do not know which sources I can find from which websites. I do not know to use special programs. I am shamefully capable of using social media, Youtube and Google. However, there are others who could not use them, so I can say that I am moderately capable of using Internet."*

It was found that a few participants considered themselves to be insufficient in using Internet (16,66%). One of them, Ferhat, stated the following:

> *"I feel myself competent in this regard. I use Internet in social studies course or in other courses as well as in daily life. I find graphics, simulations, videos, maps, visuals, presentations and others from Internet. I also encourage my students to find similar things from Internet."*

Therefore, it can be suggested that the participants mostly considered themselves as sufficienty competent in terms of using Internet in social studies courses.

Discussion and Conclusions

The findings of the study showed that 41,66% of the participants employed Internet in the social studies course, 50% of them sometimes used it in the class and 8,33% of them did not use it in the course. VanFossen (2000) found that only 12,6% of the teachers sampled always used internet. This difference may reflect the fact that internet use among teachers has become commoner over years. In short, in the current study the majority of the classroom teachers were found to employ internet in the social studies course.

Whitworth and Berson (2003) reviewed the studies about the use of internet in the social studies course and found that such studies mostly dealt with potential websites for the course of social studies, the planning of Internet-based courses, online examinations and suggestions on the use of virtual visits (Baron & Winkelman, 2001; Baron, Calandra, Fitzpatrick, & Kemker, 2001; Beal & Mason, 2001; Bellan & Scheurman, 1998; Holzberg, 1996; Krupnick, 1998; Mason & Beal,

1999; Ricchiuti, 1998; Wilson, Rice, Bagley, & Rice, 2001). In the current study, the websites and software used by the participants were analysed.

Becker, Ravitz and Wong (1999) found that during the course of social studies only 30% of the students make use of Internet. In the current study some of the classroom teachers reported that some students also employed Internet in the course.

Leon and Parr (2000) argued that websites should be used only for providing alternative learning environment, but also for supporting student learning. In the study it was found that the participants accessed various Internet-based sources (lecturing videos, test items, work sheets, slides, documentary, graphics, maps, statistical data, simulation, news story, photographs). It was also found that the participants used these sources for different steps during the course. In this sense the findings seem to support each other.

The results of the research (İşman, 2002; Asan, 2003; Akpınar, 2003) show that classroom teachers do not efficiently make use of new technologies including Internet or computer technologies in the process of teaching-learning. However, in the study the majority of the classroom teachers (38,88%) concerned themselves to be efficient in using Internet in the course of social studies. Only 16,66% of the participants reported that they were not efficient in this regard. Asan (2002) dealt with the attitudes of 265 pre-service teachers towards the use of Internet in the courses of social studies and science. It was found that the participants had a positive attitude towards the use of Internet in these courses and that they felt themselves comfortable about it.

Boon et. al. (2006) concluded that the use of technology in the course of social studies improved student achievement. Aşkar (1991) also concluded that computer-assisted teaching environment improved student interest, student motivation, their self-confidence and learning pace, comprehension, student achievement, teaching environment based on the views of teachers and students. Taylor and Duran (2006:16) employed the MITTEN (Michigan Teachers' Technology Education Network) program in their study in the context of the social studies course which allowed for student cooperation and found that it improved learning and students' attitudes towards the course. In the current study the majority of the teachers employed the websites of Morpa and Vitamin to access visuals, interactive videos, listening texts, test items and solutions, experiment videos, lecturing videos. They also reported that these sources attracted student interest and faciliated learning.

Akkoyunlu and Yılmaz (2005) dealt with the levels of computer literacy of teachers, the frequency of Internet use and the basic aims for using it. It was found that the participants mostly employed Internet to access information. In the current study it was found that the participants mostly employed Internet to access lecturing videos (75,55%), test items and work sheets (66,66%) and slides (44,44%). Therefore, it can be argued that the participants mostly made use of Internet to access information. Seferoğlu, Akbıyık and Bulut (2008) concluded that 47% of the teachers sampled used Internet for presentations. Similarly, in the current study it was found that 44% of the participants mostly accessed presentations from Internet to use in the course of social studies.

The other finding of the study is that 38,88% of the participants felt themselves capable of using Internet in the course of social studies. This finding is consistent with the finding by Tsai and Tsai (2003) which concluded that the frequency of the Internet use positively affected their self-efficacy about computers and Internet. Şahin (2009) argued that teachers mostly employed Internet for teaching and learning purposes. It can be argued that this finding is positive for the social studies education.

As stated above 38,88% of the participants felt themselves capable of using Internet in the course of social studies. Eroldoğan (2007) argued that there were not sufficient teaching materials in schools and that teachers did not have necessary information to employ teaching technology. In addition, Özbişirici (2006) found that teachers' level of information and skills to use Internet for teaching purposes was low. Therefore, there is a gap between the reports of teachers and their actual use of Internet.

In the current study it was identified that the participants mostly used Internet to prepare social studies courses but they also used it for other teaching purposes. It was also found that the participants frequently used the following websites for in class practices: morpa, egitimhane, vitamin, okulistik, sınıfogretmeniyizbiz, sorubak, eba, dersimiz, ilkokuma, leventyagmuroglu and the Turkish version of "Wikipedia". They were found to use these website for different purposes. The majority of them used the websites of "Morpa" and "vitamin" to access visuals, interactive videos, listening texts, test items and solutions, experiment videos, lecturing videos. They visited the websites of eğitimhane, sınıfogretmeniyizbiz, leventyagmuroglu to access activities, work sheets, games, and photographs. They were found to use the websites of "ilkokuma", "dersimiz", "sorubak" to access test items and other questions to be used in the class. They visited the "eba" website to find videos and presentations. The Turkish version of "Wikipedia" was used by them to access encyclopedic information and texts. They reported that they visited the websites of "Ogretmen.com", "Muratogretmen.com", "Okuloncesi.org", "Okuloncesipaylasimsitesi", "İlkogretiminkalbi", "Sadıkuygun.com", "Testimiz.com" outside the school. Some of these websites were visited to develop materials (Okuloncesi.org, Okuloncesipaylasimsitesi) or to find plans and official documents (Ogretmen.com, Muratogretmen.com and sadıkuygun.com) or to develop assignments or test items (testimiz.com). Therefore, it is seen that the participants had necessary capacity to use internet-based sources in social studies courses.

However, the findings of the study indicated that the classroom teachers did not make use of such internet-based sources as google earth, google maps, CBS, webquest which are directly related to and can be used in the social studies education. Based on the findings of the study the following suggestions were developed:

- In-service training activities may be organized to give information about the use of Internet-based sources such as google earth, google maps, CBS, webquest which can be used in social studies education.
- Internet access in school may be improved.

- Studies can be carried out to reveal the use of Internet-based sources in the course of social studies.

- Studies can be carried out to reveal the use of Internet-based sources by primary school students in the social studies courses.

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