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## Evaluation of Teacher Informatics Network (ÖBA) as an In-Service Distance Education Platform According to Teachers' Views

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### ABSTRACT

Professional development activities are important for teachers to keep up with the age and therefore to improve their current knowledge and skills. While professional development in Turkey has been continuing with face-to-face education methods for many years by the Ministry of National Education, online service has started to be provided with the pandemic and the Teacher Informatics Network platform known as ÖBA (Öğretmen Bilişim Ağı) has launched to be used. The acceptance of newly created systems by end users is important for the continuity and development of the systems. So, the views and expectations of teachers who use this platform, which started to serve as of 2022, are mainly significant. In this study, it is aimed to evaluate the ÖBA platform according to the views of teachers and to examine the suggestions and expectations of the teachers. In this context, data were collected using a questionnaire and interview form developed by the researchers within the scope of mixed method research. Quantitative data of the study were collected from 432 teachers and qualitative data were collected from 10 teachers. Quantitative data were analyzed with descriptive statistics technique, and descriptive analysis was performed for qualitative data. According to the results of the research, while teachers consider the platform's providing service of distance education and contribute to professional development as advantages, they see one-way communication, too much internet access requirement, and just being online as disadvantages. It is concluded that the views on the usefulness of ÖBA, its effect on professional development and their attitudes towards using the platform are partially, in other words, moderate.

**Keywords:** Teacher informatics network (ÖBA), in-service training, distance education

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## Introduction

In the 21st century, rapid developments and changes affect the lives of individuals and cause changes in existing systems. Education systems are also one of the systems affected by these developments, although not as much as other fields (Tondeur, Van Braak, Ertmer & Ottenbreit-Leftwich, 2017). As Uça-Güneş (2016) states, such rapid changes in technology take the biggest place in the interaction process of society, technology, and education components. In other words, technological developments make changes in education systems accompanying and compulsory. Therefore, it is inevitable that education should keep pace with technological developments, and education plays the most important role in catching up with the developments (Şimşek et al., 2008). There is a need for an education in accordance with the requirements and conditions of the age and therefore the need for qualified manpower. The training of qualified manpower is possible with a good education system, and a good education system is possible with a school that constantly renews and improves itself, and well-trained teachers who continue to train themselves (Kaçan, 2004). However, in order for the education system to keep pace with the change in information and communication technologies, teachers, one of the most important stakeholders of education, must also keep pace with this change. As Gültekin (2020) states, as in all inputs of education, teachers are also affected by the developments in national and international societies, and this necessitates teachers to update their personal and professional qualifications. In addition to constantly updating their knowledge, teachers need to quickly put the knowledge they have acquired into practice (Baştürk, 2012).

In order to realize the process of integration into the innovations brought by the age within a more systematic structure, studies on all processes of education are among the educational policies of countries. As with all educational components, professional development activities are also affected by changes in information and communication technologies. Such a change in communication technologies in the information age has changed the structure of education and made it compulsory for educators to develop new learning-teaching models (Altıparmak, Kurt, & Kapıdere, 2011). This situation has also affected the professional development process in Turkey. Professional development activities in Turkey have been ongoing since the 1960s and are carried out by the In-Service Department. As of 22 January 2022, ÖBA, a digital platform where seminars, courses, and professional development communities can be followed and organized, was put into service. Considering the advantages such as learner-centered and self-paced, time and space flexibility, affordable cost, unlimited access to information, enabling the number of people potentially reachable and archiving information (Zhang et al., 2004), ensuring equality of opportunity, easily renewable content (Yılmaz & Düğenci, 2010), reducing the need for instructors and support staff, providing opportunities for relationships between learners (Arkorful & Abaidoo, 2015), it can be said that professional development activities should be carried out in digital environment. In a basic sense, ÖBA has emerged in order to facilitate online seminars that were previously held face-to-face, to improve teachers' digital literacy, and to increase communication between teachers through professional development communities, in short, to facilitate the sharing of information that will increase teachers' professional development.

ÖBA is a recently launched e-learning system. Evaluation of e-learning systems is vital to ensure successful delivery, effective use, and positive impacts on learners (Al-Fraihat, Joy, & Sinclair, 2020). The maturity of each newly established system is made possible by the ease of use, efficiency, and meeting the expectations of the end-users who create it. Lack of user acceptance is a significant barrier to the success of new information systems (Taherdoost &

Masrom, 2009). Therefore, user acceptance has been regarded as the most important factor in determining the success or failure of any information system project (Davis, 1993). In e-learning approaches as a learning system, it should be recognized that system components and factors have critical roles in ensuring the success of the whole system (Yengin, Karahoca, & Karahoca, 2021). Teachers are one of the most important components of this system as an end user. In this respect, the opinions of teachers, who are the actual users of the system, about the newly introduced systems are important. Also, from the perspective of a professional development program, the first level of evaluation is user reactions (Guskey, 2002). The evaluation of ÖBA, which appears as an e-learning and professional development system, by teachers, who are the end users, will give an idea about how the system works. This situation enables the evaluation of the impact of professional development activities and, as Pena, Domínguez and Medel (2009) state, determining the satisfaction of users is very important for the developers and managers of the systems.

When the literature is examined, studies evaluating professional development activities through e-learning or distance education are found. For example, Koç and Özden (2013) evaluated a web support system integrated into in-service teacher training at a state university according to teachers' views. The findings showed that there was a demand for appropriate and widespread technical support. In another study, Arslan and Şahin (2013) evaluated distance education-based in-service training courses with video conferencing system according to the views of Information Technologies teachers. The results showed that giving in-service trainings via video conferencing system would not be efficient enough, interaction would be lacking, lack of attention and socialization would be limited, but it would have positive effects such as equal opportunity and saving time. Taşlıbeyaz, Karaman, and Göktaş (2014), in their study in which they examined the distance in-service training experiences of teachers, reported that the participants stated that distance in-service training activities can be preferred because they provide flexibility in terms of time and space, are interesting and accessible. It was also observed that negative opinions came to the fore in terms of technical problems and limited interaction. Tekin (2020) evaluated in-service trainings implemented by the Ministry of National Education (MoNE) through distance education method according to teachers' opinions. In the results of the study, positive opinions were found in terms of being individual and learner-centered, feeling comfortable and free, and being interesting, and negative opinions were found in terms of deficiencies such as limited communication and interaction and being a passive participant. In the literature review on the theme of the study, it is seen that there are a limited number of studies on the ÖBA platform (Akdağ, 2023; Dilekçi, 2023; Kutlucan & Seferoğlu, 2022 ; Özer & Suna, 2023, Okçu, Karakoç, Okçu, & Karakoç, 2023; Parlak, Sakarya, & Durukan-Tok, 2023). It can be said that the recent launch date of the platform is an effective reason why the number of studies is not intense. This situation became the starting point of the study, and it was decided to evaluate the platform in terms of the quality of in-service training it offers and the effects of the services. With this evaluation study conducted by taking the opinions of teachers, who are the end users, it is firstly thought that by reporting the outputs for determining the impact of the service offered, examining the quality of the platform and the in-service training offered, and providing solution suggestions for the development of the program with the study outputs obtained.

In this respect, it is believed that taking teachers' opinions about the use of the ÖBA platform and making an evaluation within the scope of the opinions received will contribute to the development of the platform with expectations and suggestions as well as contributing to the literature. In this context, the aim of the study is to evaluate ÖBA offered by MoNE to support

teachers' professional development according to teachers' opinions. In line with this purpose, answers to the following sub-problems will be sought.

1. What are the views of teachers about the ÖBA platform?
2. What are teachers' suggestions and expectations for the development of the ÖBA platform?

## **Method**

### **Research Model**

This study was designed using a mixed methodology in which both quantitative and qualitative research methods and techniques were used. The mixed method is a method in which both quantitative and qualitative data are collected, analyzed, and interpreted (Creswell, 2017). In mixed method research, qualitative and quantitative data have common importance and the relationship between qualitative and quantitative data is revealed (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2015). In this study, exploratory sequential design was preferred among mixed method designs. In the exploratory sequential design, the research starts with quantitative studies, and then qualitative studies are conducted to explain the quantitative data (Creswell, 2021; Creswell & Plano-Clark, 2015).

### **Study Group-Universe/Sample**

The accessible population of the quantitative dimension of this study consists of teachers working in public schools in Nevşehir province. The accessible population is the realistic choice of the researcher in a research study and is the universe that is actually accessible (Büyüköztürk, Kılıç Çakmak, Akgün, Karadeniz, & Demirel, 2016). The sampling group of the quantitative dimension of the study was determined using the cluster sampling method. In this method, clusters are first determined and then the sample is formed by selecting from these clusters (Korkmaz, 2020). In the cluster sampling method, random, systematic, or stratified sampling methods are used when determining sub-sets (Vogt, Gardner, & Haeffele, 2012). For this purpose, a list of schools in the accessible universe was drawn up and these were accepted as a cluster and one school from each of the primary, secondary, and high school levels in these districts was randomly selected by stratified sampling method. The sample size of the quantitative dimension of this study was calculated using the sample size calculation formula specified by Büyüköztürk et al. (2016). According to MoNE data, there are a total of 4082 teachers working in public schools in Nevşehir (Ministry of National Education [MoNE], 2022). As a result of the calculation using the formula, the required sample size was calculated as 352, and this study was conducted with the participation of 432 teachers. The demographic characteristics of the teachers participating in the study are shown in Table 1.

Table 1. Demographic Characteristics of the Participating Teachers

<b>Factors</b>	<b>Category</b>	<b>n</b>	<b>%</b>
Gender	Male	248	57,4
	Female	184	42,6
	<b>Total</b>	<b>432</b>	<b>100,0</b>
Education	Associate	8	1,8
	Undergraduate	396	91,6
	Graduate	26	6,0
	Doctorate	2	0,6
	<b>Total</b>	<b>432</b>	<b>100,0</b>
School-Type	Preschool	28	6,4
	Primary	161	37,2
	Secondary	130	30,0
	High School	108	25,0
	Others	5	1,4
	<b>Total</b>	<b>432</b>	<b>100,0</b>

When Table 1 is analyzed, 57.4% of the 432 teachers who participated in the study were male and 42.6% were female. 1.8% of these teachers have associate's degree, 91.6% have undergraduate degree, 6% have master's degree and 0.2% have doctorate. In addition, 6.4% of the teachers work in preschool, 37.2% in primary school, 30.0% in secondary school, 25.0% in high school and equivalent, and 1.4% in other institutions.

The study group of the qualitative part of the research was determined among the teachers in Kozaklı district of Nevşehir province by using criterion sampling method, which is one of the purposeful sampling methods. The main point of criterion sampling is to understand the situations that are likely to be rich in information (Patton, 2018). In this sampling method, the criteria can be determined by the researchers or a list of criteria prepared in advance can be used for this purpose (Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2013). In this context, it was determined as a criterion for the teachers who will constitute the study group to have received at least one seminar and one course-level training other than the compulsory training received during the professional study periods through the ÖBA platform. The study group of the qualitative part of this research was formed with a total of 10 teachers, 3 females and 7 males, who met these criteria and agreed to be interviewed, and the demographic characteristics of the teachers are shown in Table 2.

Table 2. Demographic Characteristics of the Participating Teachers

Teachers	Gender	Field	Grade
T1	Male	Classroom teacher	Elementary
T2	Female	Preschool	Preschool
T3	Male	Maths (Primary)	Secondary
T4	Female	Biology	High-School
T5	Male	Classroom teacher	Elementary
T6	Male	Turkish	Secondary
T7	Male	Social Studies	Secondary
T8	Female	English	Secondary I
T9	Male	Classroom teacher	Elementary
T10	Male	Computer Science	High-School

When Table 2 is examined, 3 of the 10 teachers participating in the study were female and 7 were male. While 1 of the teachers had an associate's degree, 9 of them had a bachelor's degree. Among the teachers in the study group, 3 of them work in primary school, 1 in preschool, 4 in secondary school and 2 in high school and equivalent school.

### Data Collection Tool

In the quantitative dimension of this study, the questionnaire form developed by the researchers was used. The questionnaire consists of two parts, the first part includes 6 questions to determine the demographic characteristics of the participants, and the second part includes 22 fully structured questions to determine the participants' views about the ÖBA platform. In the process of preparing the questionnaire, the stages of questionnaire preparation suggested by Büyüköztürk (2005) were followed. For this purpose, firstly, a comprehensive literature review was conducted to understand the problem situation, and the purpose of the questionnaire and the nature of the questions to be prepared were determined. Then, an item pool of 30 structured questions was created for the determined purpose. Expert opinion was sought to ensure the content validity of the draft questionnaire form. The Lawshe technique was used to calculate the consensus among experts. In this technique, the content validity rate is calculated by formulating the ratio of the number of experts who qualified the item as appropriate to half of the total number of experts whose opinions were received, minus one, and this ratio is taken as at least 0.99 for items with 5 experts' opinions (Lawshe, 1975). As a result of the calculations, 8 items were removed from the draft form due to the value below 0.99, and the content validity ratio for each of the other 22 questions was calculated as 1.00. These questions were organized according to the feedback received and the pre-application form was prepared accordingly. The pre-application of the questionnaire form was conducted with 55 teachers. It is recommended that the group size should be at least twice the number of items, preferably 10 times (Kline, 1994). Necessary arrangements were made on the pre-administered questionnaire form and the questionnaire form was finalized.

In the qualitative dimension of the study, a semi-structured interview form prepared by the researchers was used. Interviews in qualitative research provide detailed information about what the researcher cannot see and provide the opportunity to make alternative explanations about what they see (Glesne, 2014). In the interview form, there are 4 open-ended questions to determine the opinions of teachers about the ÖBA platform. Probes were written under the questions in order to reach detailed and rich information. In order to ensure content validity in interview forms, expert opinions should be taken, details should be included in the data collection, analysis, and discussion

sections for internal validity, and a pilot study should be conducted before the actual study for reliability (Metin, 2015). In the process of preparing the interview form, firstly, a literature review was conducted, and a draft interview form was created by writing 3 open-ended questions. In order to ensure the internal validity of the draft interview form, the opinions of 5 domain experts in educational sciences were consulted. The questions were reorganized according to the feedback from the experts. Lawshe technique was used to calculate the consensus among the experts. As a result of the calculations, the ratio for each of the 3 items was calculated as 1.00. After the expert opinion, no item was removed from the draft interview form and only some items were rearranged according to the feedback. The pre-application of the interview form was done with 3 teachers who were not in the study group and the form was finalized.

### **Data Collection Process**

The questionnaire form prepared to collect the quantitative data of the study was transferred to the Google Forms system in order to save time and cost and to reach more participants. The questionnaire form was sent to teachers' cell phones through online school groups. The quantitative data of the study were collected electronically at the end of the 2022-2023 academic year with a 10-day study.

Qualitative data of the study were collected by interviewing the teachers in the study group at the end of the 2022-2023 academic year. The interviews were conducted face-to-face and the interview questions were administered verbally to the teachers. Before the interview, the teachers were informed about the research and signed a document indicating that they gave permission to be interviewed. Since none of the interviewees gave permission for audio recording, no audio recording was made. The answers to the questions were written on the computer using a word processing program during the interview and the answers were confirmed by reading them to the participant at the end of the interview. The interviews were conducted in an average of 20 minutes and each participant was coded with numbers between T1 and T10 at the end of the interview.

### **Data Analyses**

In the analysis of quantitative data, frequencies and percentages of the responses to each item were calculated. Excel program was used for calculations. In the analysis of the qualitative data collected within the scope of this research, descriptive analysis method, one of the qualitative data analysis methods, was used. The purpose of descriptive analysis is to organize and present the data to the reader. With descriptive analysis, descriptions are explained and interpreted, cause-and-effect relationships are established, and conclusions are reached (Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2013).

### **Ethics committee approval process**

This study was carried out in accordance with the ethics committee permission dated 04.07.2023 and numbered 239 obtained from Erciyes University Ethics Committee.

### **Author Contribution**

The authors contributed equally to each stage of this study.

## Findings

### Findings Related to the First Sub-Problem

In this section, the findings related to the quantitative data collected from the teachers with the questionnaire form developed within the scope of the research are presented. The following tables were created by considering the order of the questions in the questionnaire form.

Table 3. Findings Related to Item 1 of the Questionnaire

Items	Level	n	%
1. Which platforms do you frequently use to meet your training needs for your professional development?	Search engines	276	63,9
	Video platforms	56	13,0
	ÖBA platform	64	14,8
	Others	36	8,3
	<b>Total</b>	<b>432</b>	<b>100,0</b>

Table 3 shows that 276 (63.9%) of the teachers used search engines, 56 (13.0%) used video platforms, 64 (14.8%) used the ÖBA platform, and 36 (8.3%) used other platforms to meet their training needs for their professional development.

Table 4. Findings Related to Item 2 of the Questionnaire

Items	Level	n	%
2. For what purpose do you mostly use the ÖBA platform?	Professional development	116	26,9
	Personal development	12	2,8
	Professional works / obligation during semester vacation periods	228	52,8
	To follow / apply for in-service trainings	68	15,7
	Using professional development communities (PDCs)	4	0,9
	To get a certificate	4	0,9
	<b>Total</b>	<b>432</b>	<b>100,0</b>

Table 4 shows that 116 (26.9%) of the teachers used the ÖBA platform for professional development, 12 (2.8%) for personal development, 228 (52.8%) for Professional works / obligation during semester vacation periods, 68 (15.7%) to follow/apply for in-service trainings, 4 (0.9%) to use professional development communities, and 4 (0.9%) to get certificates.

Table 5. Findings Related to Item 3 of the Questionnaire

Items	Level	n	%
3. How often do you visit the ÖBA platform?	During professional work / interim vacation periods	208	48,1
	Daily	4	0,9
	Once/several times a week	32	7,4
	Once/several times a month	100	23,1
	Several times a year	84	19,4
	During in-service training periods	4	0,9
	<b>Total</b>	<b>432</b>	<b>100,0</b>

Table 5 shows that 208 (48.1%) of the teachers visited the ÖBA platform during professional work / interim vacation periods, 4 (0.9%) every day, 32 (7.4%) once / several times a week, 100 (23.1%) once / several times a month, 84 (19.4%) several times a year, and 4 (0.9%) during in-service trainings.

Table 6. Findings Related to Item 4 of the Questionnaire

Items	Level	n	%
4. Approximately how many trainings have you participated in from the ÖBA platform so far?	0-10	120	27,8
	11-20	128	29,6
	21-30	88	20,4
	31-40	44	10,2
	41-50	20	4,6
	51 and over	32	7,4
	<b>Total</b>	<b>432</b>	<b>100,0</b>

Table 6 shows that 120 (27.8%) of the teachers received 0-10, 128 (29.6%) between 11-20, 88 (20.4%) between 21-30, 44 (10.2%) between 31-40, 20 (4.6%) between 41-50 and 32 (4.6%) between 51 and above.

Table 7. Findings Related to Item 5 of the Questionnaire

Items	Level	n
5. Which of these are the advantages of the ÖBA platform?	Watch training videos repeatedly	248
	Providing distance education	376
	Supporting professional development	256
	Supporting personal development	200
	Saving time	212
	Saving money	116
	Failure to control whether trainings are monitored or not	40
	Being integrated with MEBBIS* module	96

\* MEBBIS is the national school management information system

When Table 7 is examined, it is found that the highest level of emphasis is given to the fact that the ÖBA platform provides distance education opportunities, and the lowest level of emphasis is given to the fact that it is "failure to control whether trainings are monitored or not"

Table 8. Findings Related to Item 6 of the Questionnaire

Items	Level	n
6. Which of these are the disadvantages of the ÖBA platform?	Using instead of face-to-face in-service trainings	128
	Difficulty using on mobile devices	88
	Internet requirement for access	160
	Failure to control whether trainings are monitored or not	108
	One-way communication / interaction	300
	Finding the answers to end-of-course exams on the internet	56

When Table 8 is examined, it is found that one-way communication/interaction is emphasized at the highest level and the availability of end-of-course exam answers on the Internet is emphasized at the lowest level regarding the disadvantages of the ÖBA platform.

Table 9. Findings Related to Item 7 of the Questionnaire

Items	Level	n	%
7. What is your most preferred type of training on the ÖBA platform?	Seminar	356	82,4
	Course	64	14,8
	Professional Development Community	12	2,8
	<b>Total</b>	<b>432</b>	<b>100,0</b>

Table 9 shows that 356 (82.4%) of the teachers preferred seminars, 64 (14.8%) preferred courses, and 12 (2.8%) preferred professional development communities.

Table 10. Findings Related to Item 8 of the Questionnaire

Items	Level	n	%
8. Training videos attended on the ÖBA platform;	Mostly don't watch	68	15,7
	Partially watching	168	38,9
	Mostly watch	196	45,4
	<b>Total</b>	<b>432</b>	<b>100,0</b>

Table 10 shows that 68 (15.7%) of the teachers mostly did not watch the trainings they participated in through ÖBA, 168 (38.9%) partially watched them, and 196 (45.4%) mostly watched them.

Table 11. Findings Related to Items 9-22 of the Questionnaire

Items	Levels							
	No		Partially Yes		Yes		Total	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
9. I am interested in in-service trainings at ÖBA.	72	16,7	224	51,9	136	31,4	<b>432</b>	<b>100</b>
10. I think that the trainings I attended at ÖBA are important for my professional development.	80	18,5	208	48,1	144	33,4	<b>432</b>	<b>100</b>
11. I think the seminars/courses I attended on the ÖBA platform were productive.	88	20,4	220	50,9	124	28,7	<b>432</b>	<b>100</b>
12. I think the seminars/courses on the ÖBA platform are appropriate for my level.	44	10,2	176	40,7	212	49,1	<b>432</b>	<b>100</b>
13. I think that the existing seminars/courses on the ÖBA platform meet my professional needs.	92	21,3	220	50,9	120	27,8	<b>432</b>	<b>100</b>
14. I think that I can use the knowledge and skills I gained in the seminars/courses I attended on the ÖBA platform in my teaching (transfer).	68	15,7	208	48,1	156	36,2	<b>432</b>	<b>100</b>
15. I think that the educational contents provided on the ÖBA platform are sufficient	84	19,4	244	56,5	104	24,1	<b>432</b>	<b>100</b>
16. I think that the courses/seminars I attended in ÖBA produced solutions to the problems I experienced in classroom practices.	108	25,0	248	57,4	76	17,6	<b>432</b>	<b>100</b>
17. I think the interface of the ÖBA platform is useful.	48	11,1	208	48,1	176	40,7	<b>432</b>	<b>100</b>

18. I can easily put into practice what I have learned from ÖBA.	76	17,6	236	54,6	120	27,8	<b>432</b>	<b>100</b>
19. I recommend the ÖBA platform to my colleagues.	76	17,6	180	41,7	176	40,7	<b>432</b>	<b>100</b>
20. I think I am willing to use the ÖBA platform in the future.	104	24,1	188	435	140	32,4	<b>432</b>	<b>100</b>
21. I think that the trainings I got through ÖBA positively affected my pedagogical perspective.	60	139	192	44,4	180	41,7	<b>432</b>	<b>100</b>
22. I think that the trainings I got through ÖBA met my expectations.	104	24,1	196	45,4	132	30,6	<b>432</b>	<b>100</b>

When Table 11 is analyzed in general, it is seen that teachers mostly expressed "partially yes" to each of the questionnaire items. In 13 of the 14 items, the answer "yes" was more than the answer "no", while in only one item, item 16: "I think that the courses/seminars I attended in ÖBA produced solutions to the problems I experienced in classroom practices.", the answer "no" was stated more frequently than "yes". The items with the most "yes" answers are item 12 "I think the seminars/courses on the ÖBA platform are appropriate for my level." (n=232, 49,1%), item 17 "I think the interface of the ÖBA platform is useful." (n=176, 40,7%) and item 19 "I recommend the ÖBA platform to my colleagues." (n=176, 40,7%). The items with the most "no" answers are item 16 "I think that the courses/seminars I attended in ÖBA produced solutions to the problems I experienced in classroom practices." (n=108, 25,0%), item 20 "I think I am willing to use the ÖBA platform in the future." (n=104, 24,1%) and item 22 "I think that the trainings I got through ÖBA met my expectations." (n=104, 24,1%).

### Findings Related to the Second Sub-Problem

In this section, the findings related to the qualitative data collected from the teachers through the semi-structured interview form developed within the scope of the research are presented. The following tables were created by considering the order of the questions in the interview form.

The teachers in the study group were asked, "Are there any reasons that encourage you to use the ÖBA platform? If yes, what are these?" question was asked. The findings obtained as a result of the analysis of the answers are shown in Table 12.

Table 12. Findings Related to item 1 of the Interview Form

Views	Participants	f
Mandatory practice of the Ministry (to get additional course fee)	T1-T2-T3-T4-T5-T6-T7-T8-T9-T10	10
Getting a certificate	T5-T6-T7-T10	3
Accessible from anywhere	T3	1
Continuous renewal of the content	T5	1
Tracking in-service trainings / making applications	T10	1
Contribution to personal/professional development	T10	1

When Table 12 is examined, it is seen that the following opinions emerged regarding the first question of the interview: The Ministry's compulsory practice (to get additional course fee) (f=10), getting a certificate (f=3), being accessible from anywhere (f=1), continuous renewal of the content (f=1), following in-service trainings / making applications (f=1), the idea of contribution to personal / professional development (f=1).

The teacher coded T1 who participated in the interview said *"Actually, there is an obligation rather than an incentive. I don't think there is anything encouraging. I don't see the trainings we receive during seminars and professional study periods as useful. It seems like a waste of time to me."*, teacher coded T5 *"...Although I use this system out of necessity, I sometimes enter and look at the trainings. Because new content is added from time to time. If there is something there that interests me or if there is a training that I think will be useful for me over time, I sit down and attend the training."*, teacher coded T10 *"...I also enter the system thinking that it contributes to my personal and professional development or not?" I definitely look at it every week and follow the trainings. I have even applied for in-service training through this system...."*.

The teachers in the study group were asked, "Are there any reasons that prevent you from using the ÖBA platform? If yes, what are these reasons?" question was asked. The findings obtained as a result of the analysis of the answers are shown in Table 13.

Table 13. Findings Related to item 2 of the Interview Form

Views	Participants	f
Trainings do not contribute to personal/professional development	T1-T2-T3-T5	4
One-way communication / interaction	T2-T3-T4-T6	4
Certificates are not useful	T4-T5-T6-T8	4
Limitations of distance education	T1-T3-T9	3
To be seen as just numbers/statistics matter	T8-T9	2
No incentive or reward at the end of the process	T1-T9	2
Failure to distinguish between those who really watch and those who don't	T4-T8	2
Technical problems while watching	T7-T8	2
Finding the answers to end-of-course exams on the internet	T8	1
Too much internet usage	T8	1
Limited content	T1	1

When Table 13 is examined, it is seen that the following opinions emerged to the second question of the interview: "trainings do not contribute to personal/professional development" (f=4), "one-way communication / interaction" (f=4), "certificates are not being useful" (f=4), "limitations of distance education" (f=3), and "to be seen as just numbers/statistics matter" (f=2), "no incentive or reward at the end of the process" (f=2), "failure to distinguish between those who really watch and those who don't" (f=2), "technical problems while watching" (f=2), "finding the answers to end-of-course exams on the internet" (f=1), "too much internet usage" (f=1), "limited content" (f=1).

T2 coded teacher who participated in the interview said *"I don't think distance education is very useful and beneficial and that's why I don't want to use it. I think it is not a substitute for face-to-face education because there is less interaction..."*. Teacher coded T4 said *"First of all, I can say that the certificates and documents gained as a result of the trainings here are useless. Really, those who watch and those who don't watch are tarred with the same brush and as a result, both of them get certificates. I think this is a great injustice...."*, teacher coded T8 *"I can say that the ministry's policy of increasing statistics prevents me from using this system. Because from time to time, officials came out and announced that we have given so many trainings to so many teachers through ÖBA. But if it is investigated, it will be revealed how many people actually watched it and how many people benefited personally or professionally from these trainings...."*, teacher coded

T9 " *No one says well done, no one gives awards, no one says you are improving yourself, you are diligent. The ministry only advertises that we have provided this much training...*"

The teachers in the study group were asked, "Do you have any suggestions/expectations/recommendations for the development and/or efficiency of the ÖBA platform? If yes, what are they?" question was asked. The findings obtained as a result of the analysis of the answers are shown in Table 14.

Table 14. Findings Related to item 3 of the Interview Form

Views	Participants	f
Incentives and rewards should be provided	T1-T2-T4-T5-T7-T10	6
Useful certificates/documents should be given at the end of the training	T1-T4-T5-T7-T8	5
More quality / contemporary content should be added	T1-T4-T7-T8-T10	5
The number of interactive educational contents should be increased	T1-T2-T3-T5-T7	5
Number and variety of trainings should be increased	T1-T4-T8-T10	4
A section should be added to the platform where teachers' training requests can be get	T1-T8-T10	3
Trainings should be planned as hybrid learning	T3-T8	2
PDCs functionality should be improved / promoted	T6-T10	2
Content for central exams should be added	T6-T8	2
Foreign language training should be included	T8-T10	2
Problems in printing certificate should be corrected	T5-T10	2
Electronic library can be added	T8	1

When Table 14 is examined, it can be seen that in response to the fourth question of the interview, incentives and rewards should be provided (f=6), useful certificates/documents should be given at the end of the training (f=5), more quality / contemporary content should be added (f=5), the number of interactive educational contents should be increased (f=5), number and variety of trainings should be increased (f=4), A section should be added to the platform where teachers' training requests can be get (f=3), trainings should be planned as hybrid learning (f=2), PDCs functionality should be improved / promoted (f=2), content for central exams should be added (f=2), foreign language trainings should be included (f=2), problems in printing certificates should be corrected (f=2), and an electronic library can be added (f=1).

The teacher coded T1 who participated in the interview said " *I think the quality of the trainings should be improved, they should be a bit more interactive and with content suitable for our age. Especially the courses should be more challenging, but the certificate given at the end should be useful. I also think that the content of ÖBA should be enriched.*", teacher coded T4 " *At least there are courses that can be opened in schools within the scope of exercise activities. Trainings for these courses should be given in real terms and teachers who receive their certificates at the end of the course should be able to open courses in their schools with these certificates. In this way, the system will become more interesting, more efficient and more attractive.*", teacher coded T5 " *First of all, the names of some courses or seminars are too long and after completing these trainings, the full name of the course or seminar does not appear on the certificates we receive through MEBBİS. First of all, this should be corrected.*", teacher coded T6 " *These professional development communities can actually be used for project development. I think they can and should be used to produce national and international projects. Teachers from all over Turkey participate, after all, teachers from different branches. The ministry should support this, develop this field, and if necessary, offer financial incentives for this.*", teacher coded T8 " *In*

*addition, there are ALES, YÖKDİL, YDS central exams, which are required for the academic progress of teachers and conducted by Student Evaluation, Selection and Placement Centre (ÖSYM). Educational content for these exams can be added. After all, these are personal and professional development. Even electronic books can be uploaded and made available to teachers in the form of an electronic library.", teacher coded T10 " In my opinion, trainings should be geared towards the age we live in, the needs and development of the new generation of teachers. First, the areas that teachers can develop should be determined and appropriate content should be prepared. For example, trainings can be given on foreign language, advanced computer programs, educational online tools and the use of programs."*

### **Discussion, Conclusion and Suggestions**

In this study, teachers' opinions, thoughts, expectations, and suggestions about the ÖBA platform were analyzed. Some conclusions were reached in line with the findings obtained within the framework of the first sub-problem of the research. Accordingly, search engines are the most important platforms that teachers use to meet their training needs for their professional development. In addition, teachers use the ÖBA platform to a significant extent due to the necessity during professional study periods and interim vacation periods and generally visit the platform during these periods. Again, the number of trainings received by teachers using the ÖBA platform is in the range of 11-20 on average. In the studies conducted by Güvendi (2014) and Kuloğlu and Bay (2019), the result that the frequency of using the EBA (Eğitim Bilişim Ağı) platform is very low among teachers is similar to the results of this study. It is thought that teachers' preference for search engines in their professional and personal development is due to their internet habits, and that the ministry's discourse of obligation in return for additional courses distances teachers from this platform.

Teachers see the distance education opportunity of the ÖBA platform as the most important advantage. This is similar to the results of studies on online platforms such as EBA, ÖBA, etc. that offer an environment independent of time and space (Arslan & Şahin, 2013; Özdoğan & Berkant 2020; Parlak et al., 2023). Teachers see the one-way communication and interaction on the ÖBA platform as the most important disadvantage. In the study conducted by Kurnaz and Serçemeli (2020), the emphasis on the fact that the lack of sufficient interaction in distance education is seen as a difficulty experienced in the education process, and in the study conducted by Tekin (2020), the results of the lack of communication and interaction in distance in-service training and the teacher being in the passive receiver position are similar to the results of the research.

Seminars are the type of training that teachers prefer the most on the ÖBA platform. It is thought that the fact that there is no exam at the end of the seminars and that their duration is shorter is effective in such a result. On the other hand, teachers partially monitor the content of the trainings they attend through the ÖBA platform and in-service trainings on the ÖBA platform partially attract teachers' attention. In addition, the trainings on the ÖBA are considered partially important for teachers' professional development. It is thought that the emergence of such a result is due to the fact that the trainings on the ÖBA platform do not appeal to every branch and the lack of trainings that support different developmental aspects. As a matter of fact, in the study conducted by Okçu et al. (2023), when the trainings on the platform were analyzed in terms of classroom teaching, it was concluded that they were very limited in terms of classroom education.

According to the other results of the study, teachers reported that the trainings they attended through the ÖBA platform were appropriate for their level, but that these trainings were partially efficient and partially met their professional needs. In addition, teachers partially use the

knowledge and skills they acquire as a result of the trainings they receive through the ÖBA platform while teaching. In the study conducted by Gebel and Bozkurt (2022), the result that teachers could not transfer the knowledge and skills they acquired as a result of distance education courses to their professional lives is similar to the result of this study. In addition, in the study conducted by Dilekçi (2023), the result that the educational content on the ÖBA platform is not of the quality that teachers want is similar to the results of this study. It is thought that the lack of motivation in teachers is effective in teachers' inability to achieve efficiency in the trainings they attend through this platform and that these trainings cannot fully meet their professional needs. It can be said that this lack of motivation stems from how the trainings are announced and their limited content. However, in the study conducted by Okçu et al. (2023), it was concluded that teachers regarded the ÖBA platform as useful and that this platform increased their professional knowledge and skills and raised their general culture levels.

The training topics on the ÖBA platform are partially sufficient. This situation was also emphasized in the studies conducted by Dilekçi (2023) and Okçu et al. (2023). The adequacy of training topics to meet teacher needs is considered important in terms of teacher motivation. However, the newness of the platform can explain this situation. The trainings in ÖBA partially provide solutions to the problems that teachers experience in classroom practices. According to another result, teachers state that the interface of the ÖBA platform is partially useful. In the study conducted by Okçu, et al. (2023), teachers stated that although they liked the usefulness and design of the ÖBA platform, it should be improved. In addition, teachers also stated that what they learned from ÖBA partially facilitated teachers' practice, that they could partially recommend the platform to their colleagues, and that they were partially willing to use the platform later on. On the other hand, there were also opinions that the trainings received through the ÖBA partially positively affected the pedagogical perspective of the teachers and that these trainings partially met the expectations of the teachers. However, professional development activities have expected outcomes in terms of learning and teaching. The results of the study show that there is a partial overlap between what is expected and what is intended. As a matter of fact, as Guskey (2002) states, what is expected from professional development activities is a change in teachers' classroom practices, attitudes and beliefs, and learning outcomes.

Within the framework of the second sub-problem of the study, it was concluded that the most important factor encouraging teachers to use the ÖBA platform is the compulsory practice of the ministry and that teachers use the ÖBA platform due to the obligation of the ministry to receive training during the professional study periods at the beginning and end of the year and during the interim holidays. During the professional study periods and mid-term vacations, teachers are considered to have completed at least one training on the ÖBA platform and are entitled to take 15 hours of additional courses that week. Especially considering the additional course situation, it is thought that teachers use ÖBA during these periods in order to avoid financial loss. In fact, it is seen that this situation, which is expressed as a compulsory practice of the ministry, is due to the obligation to deserve additional courses (MEB, 2006). In addition, it can be stated that factors such as the desire to get a certificate, the accessibility of the system from anywhere, the continuous renewal of the content, following and applying for in-service trainings, and the idea of contributing to professional / personal development also encourage teachers to use ÖBA. In the study conducted by Doğan and Koçak (2020), the results that distance education is economical, has no space limitations, and provides fast and easy access to information are similar to the results of this study. In addition, in the study conducted by Okçu et al. (2023), the result that easy access to the platform increases the level of prefer ability is similar to the results of this study.

According to the qualitative findings obtained within the scope of the second sub-problem of the study, some conclusions were reached regarding the reasons that prevented teachers from using ÖBA. Accordingly, it was concluded that factors such as the fact that the trainings do not contribute to personal/professional development, communication/interaction is one-way, the documents or certificates obtained are useless, the limitations of distance education, being seen as an application based on statistics, the lack of an incentive or reward as a result, the inability to distinguish between those who really watch and those who do not, technical problems while watching, the availability of course exam answers on the internet, spending too much internet quota, and the limited content prevent teachers from using ÖBA or push them away from this platform. In the study conducted by Efriana (2021), the results of experiencing internet quota shortage in distance education and the disadvantage of high internet cost are similar to the results obtained in this study. In the study conducted by Parlak et al. (2023), the limited content on the ÖBA platform is similar to the results of this study. Again, in the study conducted by Türker and Dündar (2020), the result that one of the biggest factors in the effective and evolutionary use of EBA is infrastructure problems is similar to the results of this study.

The results of the findings obtained within the framework of the second sub-problem of the research reveal the opinions, expectations and suggestions of the teachers regarding the development and efficiency of the ÖBA platform. Accordingly, teachers want incentives and rewards for the use of ÖBA, they expect the documents received at the end of the training to be functionalized, they demand better quality and contemporary content, they want interactive educational content, they express that the number and variety of trainings should be increased, and they demand a section for receiving training requests. It was concluded that they want to participate in hybrid trainings, they want the functionality of PDCs to be improved and they want to be encouraged to use it, they want content for central exams, they want foreign language trainings to be included, they want the problems in printing certificates to be corrected and they want an electronic library to be added. In the study conducted by Nafsi and Maryanti (2022), it was concluded that the development of educational content is important in studies conducted through distance education and that the content of the trainings in the form of multimedia applications will increase the quality of distance education. It is stated that the variety of materials in distance education is important in increasing the quality and efficiency of education (Chao, Saj, & Tessier, 2006). In addition, in the study conducted by Türker and Dündar (2020), some of the teachers stated that there should be incentives and rewards in the use of EBA. In the study conducted by Kana and Aydın, the result that the videos on the EBA platform are not in a way to cover 21st-century teaching methods is similar to the results of this research. Again, in the study conducted by Dilekçi (2023), the results of the study are similar to the results of this research that teachers want the EBA platform to include trainings to improve language skills, trainings on social and emotional learning issues, and hobby trainings. In the study conducted by Okçu et al. (2023), teachers suggested that the educational content should be improved in terms of quantity and quality.

The recommendations that can be given according to the analysis of the study results are as follows. Reward is an important factor in increasing participation and motivation. Teachers who use the ÖBA platform effectively, efficiently, and regularly can be rewarded. In the process of determining ÖBA educational content, by ensuring that more teachers' opinions are centered, a needs analysis can be made with large participation for ÖBA educational content, and the content can be shaped and developed according to the needs of the teachers. Another situation is to make the documents given to teachers valuable. With the certificates obtained as a result of ÖBA

trainings, teachers can be allowed to work as trainers in activities such as courses and exercises. Educational contents for foreign language teaching and central exams (ALES, YÖKDİL, YDS, Promotion in Duty, etc.) attended by teachers can be added to the ÖBA platform. By enriching the platform academically, an electronic library module that includes academic books and research studies can be added to the ÖBA platform. Educational contents can be arranged in an interactive format that will increase teacher participation. In addition, ÖBA contents can be analyzed and categorized in terms of being for personal-professional development or for branches. When the results obtained within the scope of the research are evaluated in general, the following suggestions can be made to the researchers. Studies can be carried out in which the contents of ÖBA are evaluated for branches. In addition, in terms of professional development, studies that propose methods for the needs analysis of distance education in-service platforms such as ÖBA can be carried out.

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