Education Quarterly Reviews

The Asian Institute of Research *Education Quarterly Reviews* is a peer-reviewed International Journal. The journal covers scholarly articles in the fields of education, linguistics, literature, educational theory, research, and methodologies, curriculum, elementary and secondary education, higher education, foreign language education, teaching and learning, teacher education, education of special groups, and other fields of study related to education. As the journal is Open Access, it ensures high visibility and the increase of citations for all research articles published. The *Education Quarterly Reviews* aims to facilitate scholarly work on recent theoretical and practical aspects of education.

An Analysis of Social Studies Teachers' Opinions on Distance Education After Covid-19 Pandemic

Murat Tartuk[1]

[1] İstanbul University-Cerrahpaşa, İstanbul, Turkey. m.tartuk@hotmail.com ORCID: 0000-0002-3226-2123

Correspondence: Murat Tartuk, İstanbul University-Cerrahpaşa, İstanbul, 34000, Turkey.Tel: 05352045353.
E-mail: m.tartuk@hotmail.com

Abstract
Distance education offers an important teaching method in our age thanks to the development and widespread use of digital technologies. Distance education has been used especially during the Covid-19 pandemic in recent years and has significantly shaped education and training activities since then. This study aims to examine the opinions of social studies teachers on distance education. The study addresses the effect of distance education on teaching from various aspects. The study was designed as a case study, one of the qualitative research designs. The data were obtained using a semi-structured interview form developed by the researcher. The study group consisted of 10 social studies teachers working in different provinces of Turkey. According to the results of the study, teachers evaluated distance education as different from face-to-face education in 5 different categories. These are physical, social, time and space, material use and difference in skills training. According to the teachers, classroom management is artificially easier in distance education. They evaluated distance education as unfavorable in terms of communication. Teachers reported that the use of materials is more advantageous in distance education and that these materials are mostly digital materials. These teachers alsobelieve that distance education decreases student success, face-to-face education is the most appropriate method for learning activities, and distance education should be used merely as a supportive element for face-to-face education.

Keywords: Covid-19, Distance Education, Social Studies, Teachers' Opinions

1. Introduction

The World Health Organization (WHO) recognized Covid-19, starting in Wuhan, China in December 2020 and spreading rapidly around the world, as a "pandemic" on 11 March 2020 (WHO, 2020). The WHO mid-year report for 2022 reported more than 574 million confirmed cases and 6.3 million deaths by the end of July 2022 (WHO, 2022). UNESCO's updated Covid-19 education data shows that the pandemic has affected more than 1.5 billion students. In addition, there has been a loss in the achievements towards the goals of the 2030 education agenda (UNESCO, 2022).

With the Covid-19 pandemic, there has been a mandatory change process in the field of education as in many fields (Bakioğlu & Çevik, 2020). Many students receiving compulsory and basic education worldwide have been affected by this process of change brought by the pandemic (Zhong, 2020). According to the National Education 2021-2022 statistics, 19 million 155 thousand 571 students receive formal education in our country, and 1 million 139 thousand 673 teachers work in schools continuing formal education (MoNE, 2022). Our country, having such a high number of education statistics, continued the education process through distance education for a while during the periods when pandemic measures were taken in order not to disrupt education and training activities. Although students and teachers faced disruptions in different aspects of education during this teaching process, education continued and all stakeholders had an unfamiliar experience. During this process, the Ministry of National Education's (MoNE) EBA (Education Information Network) portal has assumed an important role. EBA has been the dominant digital social education platform used in the distance education process. EBA ensured the continuity of education both through TV broadcasts and online during the Covid-19 mandatory distance education period.

The pandemic has opened a new chapter in distance education and digital learning and has led to its increasing use and development. It has revolutionized the effective use of digital devices, online resources and social media for education (Mulenga & Marban, 2020). In this way, different disciplines and sectors, as well as the majority of society, have learned to use distance education in a more physically and financially effective way. After the pandemic was brought under control, trainings started to be held face-to-face again instead of distance education. Through this process, teachers and students have gained significant experience in distance education. In addition, the infrastructure, content and tools of distance education in our country have shown a significant development. According to Holmberg (1995), distance education is a process that has planning, teaching and guidance dimensions and students and teachers do not have to share the same environment. Distance education is a type of education in which the learner and the teacher are far away from each other in terms of space in the teaching-learning process and digital materials and tools are used more easily (Uşun, 2006). Distance education was first implemented by mail in 1728, and in our age, thanks to the advancing information technologies, it is now being implemented effectively using more qualified internet applications. Distance education applications, which were seen as utopia in previous years, can now be implemented using the global communication network infrastructure with the advances in ICT (Information Communication Technologies) tools (İşman, 2011). In addition to the benefits of distance education presentations such as the ability to send information from the education center to the whole world, allowing students to access information from wherever they want, and providing more detailed and faster feedback, there are limitations such as the inability to establish face-to-face interaction, the inability to immediately solve problems that arise during learning, and the economic burden in the establishment of the infrastructure (Dinçer, 2016).

Distance education has two main components. These are education and information communication technologies. The tradition of science, which is the basis of education, and the rapidly advancing information communication technologies in our age make distance education possible and necessary. Developed countries support lifelong learning in terms of the education level of their citizens and work to ensure this. For this purpose, distance education is important for countries to continue their education and training activities without interruption and to make them continuous (Kırık, 2014). In addition, it is extremely important for distance education institutions to update their existing curricula for distance education and to develop new teaching methods and strategies to be used in distance education (Agnoletto & Queiroz, 2020; Toquero, 2020). Furthermore, in order to use distance education more effectively, studies to improve teachers' and students' skills in using technology should be carried out simultaneously.

Various studies have been conducted on the effects of distance education and the Covid-19 pandemic period on the teaching process. Demir and Özdaş (2020) examined teachers' views on distance education in the Covid-19 process, and teachers evaluated distance education activities in three different ways: satisfactory, unfavorable and limited. Özdoğan and Berkant (2020) examined stakeholder views on distance education during the Covid-19 pandemic period, and it was determined that the stakeholders' views on the advantages of distance education were mostly independent of time and space, the ability to watch the lessons repeatedly, the ability to meet the need for education during the pandemic period, protection against the transmission of the disease, the importance of

technology in education and the development of technological skills. Kırıkçı et al. (2022) evaluated the views of teachers teaching social studies courses on distance education, and found that teachers did not find it appropriate to provide knowledge, skills, values and achievements related to their fields through distance education.

This study aims to examine social studies teachers' views on distance education after the Covid-19 pandemic. Unlike similar studies, this study deals with distance education holistically from various aspects and evaluates the effects of distance education on the teaching process (classroom management, communication, material use, class participation, time management, student achievement). The main problem of the study was "how do social studies teachers evaluate distance education as an alternative to face-to-face education in all stages of teaching in the post-pandemic period?". For this purpose, answers to the following questions were sought:

1. What are the opinions of social studies teachers about the differences between distance education and face-to-face education?
2. How do social studies teachers think distance education affects the teaching process (classroom management, communication, material use, class participation, time management)?
3. How do social studies teachers evaluate the effect of distance education on student achievement?
4. How do social studies teachers evaluate the advantages and disadvantages of distance education for teachers and students?
5. What kind of problems have social studies teachers generally encountered in distance education?
6. Which type of education do social studies teachers want to continue as the dominant type of education?

2. Method

2.1 Research Design

This study, which was conducted in accordance with the qualitative research procedure, examined teacher views in depth. Qualitative research involves the use of qualitative data collection methods such as observation, interview and document analysis to determine perceptions and events in a realistic and holistic way (Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2013). The study was designed as a case study, one of the qualitative research designs. Case study is a type of study in which any real situation encountered in life is examined in all aspects (Yin, 2009). In a case study, the researcher aims to collect in-depth information through multiple sources of information (e.g. observations, interviews, documents, and reports) to create a case description or case themes (Creswell, 2015).

2.2 Participants

The study group consisted of 10 social studies teachers working in different cities in Turkey. Online interviews lasting 25-35 minutes on average were conducted using Zoom and Skype programs with the teachers whom the researcher could reach and who agreed to be interviewed. These interviews were recorded with the permission of the participants and then transcribed. The study group was selected according to the convenience sampling technique, one of the purposeful sampling types. In addition to providing speed and practicality to the researcher, convenience sampling method is mostly preferred in cases where it is not possible to use other sampling methods (Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2013).

2.3 Data Collection Tools and Data Analysis

The data of the study were obtained by using a semi-structured interview form with 8 open-ended questions developed by the researcher. The interview form included questions to determine teachers' general opinions and evaluations about distance education. There are questions about the most significant differences between distance education and face-to-face education, the effects of distance education on the teaching process and student success in all aspects, the advantages and disadvantages of distance education for teachers and students, and the problems encountered in distance education. The interview form was prepared in accordance with the purpose of the study and expert opinion was obtained from 2 faculty members with doctoral degrees. After being examined in terms of structure, content and language validity, the interview form was finalized. Before starting the data collection

process, a pilot study was conducted with 2 social studies teachers to determine the suitability of the form and its suitability for the research was tested. The data were obtained through in-depth interviews (Creswell, 2019), which are widely used in qualitative research and are one of the main data collection tools. Interview is a method used to obtain information that is difficult to observe directly or that we cannot obtain through observation (Patton, 2015). Presenting the themes, categories and codes obtained from the interviews in this study to expert confirmation, including direct quotations, focusing on all the characteristics of the phenomenon examined and clearly expressing the study process contributed to its validity and reliability.

The data obtained from the interviews were analyzed using content analysis and descriptive analysis. Content analysis attempts to define the data and reveal the facts that may be hidden in these data. The main action in content analysis is to bring together similar data within the framework of concepts and themes and to interpret them by organizing them in a format that readers can understand. In descriptive analysis, the data collected from the participants are interpreted and summarized by considering the predetermined themes. Direct quotations are frequently used in descriptive analysis (Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2013).

3. Results

In this study, conducted to determine the general opinions and evaluations of social studies teachers about distance education, the interviewed teachers were coded as T1, T2... T10 in the presentation of the findings obtained for confidentiality reasons. The findings were analyzed and explained in 6 sections depending on the study questions.

3.1 Social studies teachers' opinions on the differences between distance education and face-to-face education

The social studies teachers were asked to compare distance education and face-to-face education and to state what the most significant differences were. Teachers' answers were analyzed and presented in detail in Table 1.

Table 1: Opinions on the differences between distance education and face-to-face education

Theme	Categories	Codes
Basic Differences	Physical differences	Course environment
		Virtuality
		Face-to-face interaction
		Eye contact
		Content sharing
		Continuity of training
	Social differences	Communication
		Socialization
		Student interest
		Emotional differences
		Student intervention
		Student behavior
		Teacher behavior
		Student teacher interaction
		Teacher control
		Student feedback
	Time and space difference	Time flexibility
		Space flexibility
		Use of time
	Difference in material use	Technology use
		Material sharing
		Use of physical whiteboards
	Difference in skills training	Opportunity to work together
		Cooperation and interaction

A review of Table 1 reveals that social studies teachers' views on the main differences between distance education and face-to-face education are grouped into five categories. These categories are physical differences, social differences, time and space differences, differences in the use of materials and differences in skills training. Distance education and face-to-face education have basic features that differ in many respects. In the category of physical differences, the main differences frequently mentioned by social studies teachers are course environment, virtuality, face-to-face interaction, eye contact, content sharing and continuity of education.

T1 said: "*I think the most obvious difference is that the course environment "is a virtual environment, that is, it is not face-to-face communication, everyone participates remotely, there is no live classroom environment*" while T2 expressed the following *"we cannot provide eye contact, sometimes we make a joke, we try to activate the student from there, we can somehow manage to involve our students who are resting in the back rows in face-to-face education. However, this is quite difficult in distance education."* On the other hand, T4 stated that *"the most obvious difference is basically the interaction between the teacher and the student, while the interaction with the student is more in face-to-face education, it is less in distance education."* The teachers' statements indicate that the fact that distance education does not require a physical presence, that is, it is carried out in a computer environment, causes it to differ from face-to-face education in many ways. In particular, the fact that distance education is virtual, not interactive, and therefore teachers cannot use message-oriented elements such as eye contact with their students causes limitations.

T7 stated that *"sharing is much easier in distance education, it is a great convenience to be able to share all kinds of materials such as questions, videos, etc."* In terms of content sharing, it is much more possible to use materials that are difficult to bring to the classroom, especially in time and space, in distance education. It is possible to say that distance education infrastructure differs from face-to-face education in terms of content integrated with technology, document use and content sharing. T8 said: *"It is very good that distance education can be used in terms of continuity of education or in terms of providing education when faced with compulsory situations. When face-to-face education is interrupted, you can somehow continue it with distance education."* Distance education has become both a good alternative when face-to-face education is not possible due to necessity, and a more frequently used alternative with the various opportunities it offers. During the Covid-19 pandemic faced by the whole world, distance education has assumed an important role and duty in the continuation of education and training activities without interruption during periods when face-to-face education could not be provided.

The social differences frequently mentioned by teachers consisted of communication, socialization, student interest, emotional differences, student intervention, student behavior, teacher behavior, student-teacher interaction, teacher control and student feedback. Social studies teachers mostly emphasized the social differences between distance education and face-to-face education.

T2 stated the following: *"in distance education, even if the student's camera is on, even if he/she is eager for the lesson, there cannot be a full communication with the teacher".* Again, T2 said: *"In the classroom, the student is more comfortable with his/her friends and therefore can express himself/herself better, whereas in distance education, since the family is at home, sometimes when the family demands to listen to the lesson, it is as if the student becomes more arrested. The student who is normally cheerful and participates in the lesson can stand further back. This also happens with us teachers. Families also listen to us sometimes, and this causes me to get nervous."* Home environment and external factors have negative effects on the teaching process in distance education. Therefore, this situation negatively affects the natural flow of the lesson process and differentiates teacher and student behavior. In addition, communication and classroom environment in distance education and face-to-face education differ significantly.

Teachers think that face-to-face education is much more instructive in terms of real life experience and interaction, that verbal communication as well as some non-verbal communication elements are used more effectively in face-to-face education and that this has a significant effect on teaching. In this regard, T8 stated the following: *"When it is noticed that the student's interest in the lesson has decreased or he/she is bored, activity mobility or activity change can be applied in face-to-face education".* On the other hand T4 said: *"During the lesson, the student can sometimes be physically in the classroom and mentally somewhere else, and as a teacher we can understand this.*

You ask a question to the student instantly and the student gives you feedback immediately. In distance education, on the other hand, the student seems to be present in the class, you ask a question to the student, and when the student cannot answer the question, he/she immediately leaves the class and then says, "My teacher, the internet has gone out" and it is easier to make excuses for this. In face-to-face education, it is easier to understand whether the student is really there or not, but this is not possible in distance education." As can be understood from T4's statements, it is very difficult for the teacher to predict whether the students are following the lesson and what they are dealing with in distance education. One of the main strengths of face-to-face education is that the teacher can establish a real contact with the students during the lesson. During the interviews, social studies teachers frequently emphasized this issue. This also positively affects student interest during the lesson.

T7 said: *"The biggest handicap of distance education is not being able to reach the students, that is, not being able to reach them emotionally"*, T8, on the other hand, stated that *"the excitement of the student, the sparkle in his/her eyes, the victory gesture of understanding are not seen, in short, it is not remotely noticeable whether that emotional integrity that should be awakened in the student is present or not."* In face-to-face education the relationships that teachers establish with their students and students with their peers fill an important gap in their minds emotionally. Therefore, this is an important element that nourishes them socially. One of the main and important differences between distance education and face-to-face education is that distance education is inadequate in the dimension of in-class relationships, which is frequently mentioned in teachers' statements.

When an undesirable situation occurs in the classroom, it is much easier for the teacher to intervene in this situation in face-to-face education. Regarding this situation, T4 stated the following *"in face-to-face education, for example, if a student does not have a pen, we can give a pen to the student and continue from there, but in distance education, it is much more difficult to eliminate these as a teacher when the internet is cut or the student does not have internet access."* The ability of the teacher to establish an organic bond with the students in the classroom makes face-to-face education stand out against distance education. The opportunity for the teacher to intervene in the teaching process is much more in face-to-face education than in distance education.

T8 stated that distance education is quite limited compared to face-to-face education in terms of getting feedback from students with the following statements: *"Face-to-face education is healthier in terms of getting feedback from students and correcting them if there is a deficiency or mistake. In distance education, when the students say, "Did you understand this?" there is no way to measure this and it cannot be measured and it is not very comprehensive."* In distance education, it is also very difficult for the teacher to get real and healthy feedback from the students in front of the computer. It is possible to say that the possibility of misleading the teacher is relatively high with the limited number of student feedbacks in live lessons in distance education.

Social studies teachers' dimensions related to the time and space differences of distance education and face-to-face education consist of time flexibility, space flexibility and time utilization codes. Distance education and face-to-face education basically differ in time and space. In distance education, the teacher has the flexibility to choose the time of the lesson and the place to attend the lesson, while this is not the case in face-to-face education. T3 stated the following regarding this issue: *"Flexibility of time and place, that is, it is more flexible in distance education, whereas in face-to-face education it is carried out in a certain place in a certain period of time."*

The codes created from the teachers' statements about the difference between distance education and face-to-face education in terms of material use are technology use, material sharing and physical board use. Distance education and face-to-face education differ in terms of using technology, sharing course materials and using physical or virtual whiteboards. Regarding these differences, T10 said: *"In face-to-face education, you are not so dependent on technology, but in distance education, technology is absolutely indispensable. The most important difference is the use of technology."* In addition to the fact that distance education is realized with the possibilities of technology, it stands out in the use of different technological tools in the teaching process. Therefore, we can say that the material sharing expressed in teacher opinions is stronger than face-to-face education in this direction. In addition, the use of virtual board in distance education makes the use of the board more practical for teachers and students. The statements of social studies teachers under the category of differentiation between distance education and face-to-face education in skills training are the opportunity to work together and cooperation and interaction. The

prominent point here is that face-to-face education is suitable for skills training, that is, it is suitable for cooperative learning and interaction. While in face-to-face education, it is expected and desired that students learn socially or interact and cooperate in the course process, distance education is unfavorable in this respect. In this regard, T8 said: *"Social activities that support education are the activities on certain days and weeks. In face-to-face education, these can be supported and very productive social activities can emerge. However, in distance education, it is more difficult to overlap such skills based on social work, practice, visuals and interaction with the course outcomes."*

3.2 Social studies teachers' opinions on the ımpact of distance education and face-to-face education on the teaching process

The impact of distance education and face-to-face education on the teaching process were analyzed under 5 headings and presented in detail by the researcher in Table 2.

Table 2: The ımpact of distance education and face-to-face education on the teaching process

Theme	Categories	Codes
Impact on Teaching Process	Class management	Artificial convenience
		Distance of students
		Accessibility to students
		Routing
		Student intervention
	Communication with the Students	Negative
		Individual differences
		Technical issues
	Material Use	Advantageous
		Digital materials
		Tangible materials
	Attendance	Low
		Access to computer
		Siblings' sharing of IT tools
	Time management	Available
		Dependence on external factors

An examination of Table 2 reveals that social studies teachers' views on the effects of distance education and face-to-face education on the teaching process are grouped into 5 different categories. These categories are classified as classroom management, communication with students, use of materials, attendance and time management. The results revealed that distance education facilitates classroom management in the teaching process in terms of its basic structure and possibilities, but this facilitation is artificial. Most of the interviewed teachers stated that classroom management in distance education is under the control of the teacher with the possibilities of technology in live classes, and that this situation is due to the distance of students from each other.

T6 said: *"Classroom management is a little easier in distance education because the children are not in the same environment, for example, when someone speaks, it can distract other students in the class, even me, and I have to intervene, classroom management is easier, but artificially easier"* while T3 made the following statement *"in face-to-face education, one mischievous student in the classroom can distract the whole class, in distance education it is completely under the control of the teacher, you can turn off the student's screen and prevent him from disturbing other students, I think classroom management is easier in distance education."* Social studies teachers think that the opportunity to direct and intervene with students during the lesson is stronger in distance education. In face-to-face education, unexpected events in the classroom or students arguing among themselves are among the factors that make the flow of the lesson and therefore classroom management difficult.

In terms of communication with students, teachers think that distance education offers a lower level of communication than face-to-face education. T1, one of the teachers who thought that distance education was limited in this regard, said, *"teaching a lesson by looking at the child's eyes in the classroom environment and teaching a lesson on the computer are very different things, the level of communication is naturally at a low level"*, T8 stated that *"face-to-face education is more reasonable in terms of students and teachers passing their feelings to each other."* T2, one of the teachers who think that there are some individual differences in communication and that middle school students who are in adolescence do not communicate, especially due to their shyness, stated that *"students are more timid, I do not think they ask questions comfortably, they are afraid that their voices and images will be bad."* T6 stated that distance education decreases communication mostly due to lack of infrastructure with the following words: *"Due to technical problems, connection problems, infrastructure problems, lack of equipment, students cannot communicate easily with students."*

Social studies teachers believe that distance education is advantageous in terms of the use of materials in the teaching process. Especially in live lessons in distance education, it is possible to use various visual and interactive materials with the opportunities offered by technology. In this regard, teachers stated that there is a variety of materials and the speed of accessing the materials is high. They stated that they could access many materials during the lesson, especially through Google and Youtube, and that they used teaching materials more frequently in distance education due to the ease of access and display. T9 stated the following in this regard: *"I think it is more advantageous in terms of material use. There is no interactive board in my classroom. However, with the applications I use in computer environment in distance education, I can easily access many contents and course materials and reflect them on my screen"* while T2 said: *"This aspect is very nice, it makes it very easy to use the material, everything is at hand. For our course, social studies, youtube is a very rich environment. I cannot use youtube at school because of the low internet speed, but not in distance education."*

Stating that distance education is convenient in terms of digital materials in the teaching process and that it is not possible to use tangible materials, T3 said: *"It is very rich in terms of digital content materials, we can easily access visual and auditory resources in distance education. Naturally, we cannot use physical, concrete materials."* T4 expressed that in distance education, students can also present materials in the course and that students also contribute to the enrichment of the course content: *"In distance education, it is possible to instantly reflect a content on the child's screen. Or the child presents you a content, the teacher says there is such a video, for example, we watch and evaluate that video in the lesson."* In addition to increasing student-teacher interaction, this is a supportive factor for students' active role in the teaching process. Students' contribution to course content and materials in distance education can also support the acquisition of some skills. Especially research and communication skills are expected to improve.

Teachers stated that class participation in distance education is lower than in face-to-face education. According to them, in face-to-face education there is the concern of being counted absent, whereas in distance education, even if the student comes to class, he/she somehow leaves the class and makes the excuse that he/she cannot attend the class due to technical problems. Another issue is students' access to digital tools. In families with a high number of siblings, some students cannot participate in distance education due to lack of computers or tablets. Regarding this issue, T1 said: *"I think distance education is disadvantageous in terms of student participation. Sometimes I see that I started the lesson with 15 people and then the number dropped to 7, some of them lost their connection, ran out of internet or had to leave due to their siblings' class, such problems can occur"* while T3 said: *"One of the most common problems encountered in distance education is low attendance. The reasons for this are the high number of siblings in the family, for example, there is 1 tool and internet is not enough."*

Social studies teachers believe that distance education is convenient in terms of time management but can be interrupted due to some external factors. Regarding this issue, T2 said: *"I finished the subjects earlier in distance education and did much more activities than in face-to-face education. Although the duration of the lesson was 30 minutes, the lessons were full"*, while T7 said: *"The subject that I could not teach in 40 minutes in face-to-face education, I taught comfortably in distance education because I supported it with materials, i.e. videos"* and T3 said: *"While the time was not enough in face-to-face education, we taught our lessons comfortably in distance education. There may be undesirable situations caused by external factors in distance education. For example,*

the family can intervene or problems with the internet can cause loss of time." Since the number of stimuli is more limited in distance education than in face-to-face education, there is less lost time during the lesson. With the start of the lesson, the teacher can make a quick introduction to the subject on the screen and does not deal with routines as in face-to-face education. Therefore, the time allocated for the lesson can be used more effectively.

3.3 Social studies teachers' opinions on the ımpact of distance education on student success

The impact of distance education and face-to-face education on student success was analyzed holistically and the codes formed in the interviews are presented in Table 3.

Table 3. The ımpact of distance education on student success

Theme	Codes
Student Success	Low
	Classroom environment
	Teacher follow-up
	Misuse of technology
	Lack of teacher reinforcement
	Peer learning
	Motivation
	Competition
	Social learning
	Social activities

The interviews conducted with social studies teachers about the effects of distance education and face-to-face education on student academic success revealed that, without exception, they stated that distance education decreases student success. They believe that face-to-face education is the most appropriate method for learning and that distance education should be used as a supportive element of face-to-face education. They stated that in face-to-face education, the school environment and its elements constitute a whole, and that students are not only given academic information at schools, but also prepared for society as cultured individuals. They also state that the classroom environment and rules also prepare students.

T3 said: *"in face-to-face education, the student attends school and the teacher can follow him/her closely in class, in distance education, I think student success is negatively affected because the teacher does not have the opportunity to monitor the student."*

Teachers believe that technology makes students addicted to technology and internet and individualizes them in the distance education process. Addressing this situation, T5 said: *"Students who sit in front of the screen to attend class may be interested in other things rather than the lesson. Students who spend time individually can become addicted to technology and games."*

In face-to-face education, the role of the teacher in the classroom is unquestionably an important factor in success. The fact that teacher reinforcement is more limited in distance education limits students' motivation for success. Regarding this situation, T9 said: *"In face-to-face education, I sign the student's notebook, sometimes I give a star to the homework they have prepared, I reward them in different ways. In distance education, this is not possible, partly verbally or sometimes with emojis."*

In face-to-face education, students learning from their peers, sometimes competing with their peers or social learning through social activities have an important place in learning. In this respect, T2 said: *"Through social activities such as sports activities, we can win students over, indirectly increasing their motivation."*

3.4 Social studies teachers' opinions on the advantages of distance education

Table 4 presents the opinions of social studies teachers on the advantages of distance education in detail.

Table 4: Advantages of distance education

Theme	Categories	Codes
Advantages	For teachers	Comfort
		Time saving
		Financial savings
		Ability to use technology
	For students	Comfort
		Course repetition
		Reinforcement
		Ability to use technology

Teachers' opinions on the advantages of distance education were analyzed in 2 different categories. For the teacher, distance education was coded as comfort, time saving, financial savings and the ability to use technology. For students, the advantages were coded as comfort, course repetition, reinforcement and the ability to use technology. The advantages of distance education that are similar for teachers and students are that the opportunity to make the lessons from anywhere offers comfort to the stakeholders and also provides the stakeholders with the ability to use technology. The majority of the teachers interviewed stated that distance education provides significant comfort and that they can focus on the education process with less preparation without leaving home. In addition, they think that distance education improves their ability to use technology and that spending more time with the internet and digital tools increases their knowledge and skills in this direction.

T1*: "In face-to-face education, I spend more energy when I enter the classroom. In distance education, you can calmly explain your lesson from wherever you want",* T2*: "Being able to take classes from home means less physical fatigue",* T3*: "Distance education has been very beneficial to me, especially from my own point of view, in terms of integrating digital technology into education, because before the widespread use of distance education, we could not use most of the web 2.0 tools, but with distance education, we learned many applications and started to use them actively in the lessons."*

Teachers also stated that distance education saves time and money. Teachers who participate in distance education from home have the opportunity to prepare to go to school and use the time spent on the road for different tasks. Likewise, this also creates a financial saving opportunity for teachers.

The advantages of distance education for students as opposed to teachers are the opportunity to repeat and reinforce courses. Recording courses in distance education gives students the opportunity to repeat the topics later. In this way, students have the opportunity to reinforce the subjects they have learned. Accordingly T2 said: *"If you can re-enter the missed lesson, it is good and advantageous in this respect. It is also good for reinforcement if it is possible to follow several teachers."*

3.5 Social studies teachers' opinions on the disadvantages of distance education

Table 5 presents the opinions of social studies teachers on the disadvantages of distance education in detail.

Table 5: Disadvantages of distance education

Theme	Categories	Codes
Disadvantages	For teachers	Difficulty in monitoring students
		Being teacher-centered
		Inability to communicate with the student
		Failure to socialize

	For students	Failure to cooperate
		Failure to socialize
		Failure to communicate properly
		Failure to develop skills
		Failure to develop value
		Inequality of opportunity
		Lack of practice

Teachers' opinions on the disadvantages of distance education were analyzed in 2 different categories. From the teacher's point of view, the codes consisted of difficulty in monitoring students, being teacher-centered, inability to communicate with students, inability to socialize and inability to cooperate. In terms of students, they were coded as inability to socialize, inability to communicate properly, inability to develop skills, inability to develop values, inequality of opportunity and lack of practice.

Social studies teachers reported that distance education posed difficulties for teachers in monitoring students and did not provide sufficient and accurate communication with students. T1: *"I don't know what my student is doing on the other side, he may play with something else, he may get distracted",* T5: *"You can't make eye contact, you can't see what the student is doing, it can be difficult to manage the lesson, that is, classroom management."*

T2, one of the teachers who criticized the fact that distance education is more teacher-centered, said: *"The teacher is active in the lessons as a one-sided feeder organ and this is a disadvantage. The lack of participation in the lesson can affect the teacher."* While sharing the content, teachers cannot do many activities and practices that they apply in face-to-face education due to the nature of distance education. For this reason, lessons are generally teacher-oriented and teacher-centered lecture method is preferred. In this regard, T8 thinking that students are lacking in different aspects in terms of application in distance education said: *"The gap of lack of practice is evident in the students. Emotional, cognitive, psychomotor skills are not engaged and students are lacking in this part."*
Distance education has a significant disadvantage for teachers and students in terms of communication, collaboration and socialization. Students who can communicate and cooperate with their teachers and peers in face-to-face education may become isolated in distance education. In the time spent in front of the computer, students are mostly informed about the content at the theoretical level. The 21st century educational approach of learning by doing and experiencing is not possible in distance education. In addition, it is very difficult for students to acquire some skills and values in distance education. In this regard, T2 said: *"Students' interactive learning and development with each other is not fully realized. Behavior training is incomplete. It is difficult for skills to come to the fore. Value perceptions are not fully developed."*

3.6 Social studies teachers' opinions on problems encountered in distance education

The opinions of social studies teachers on the problems they face in distance education were examined in detail and presented in Table 6.

Table 6: Problems encountered in distance education

Theme	Categories	Codes
Problems	Technical problems	Connection problem
	Structural problems	Dependence on external factors
		Contact
		Absenteeism
		Lack of measurement and evaluation
		Digital security
		Digital morality
	Access problems	Access to the ınternet
		Access to digital tools

The opinions of social studies teachers about the problems encountered in distance education were analyzed in 3 different categories. These are technical problems, structural problems and access problems. Teachers stated that they mostly experienced connection problems regarding technical problems. Connection problems negatively affect the flow of the course and the general functioning. In this regard, T1 said: *"The most common problem we encountered was the connection, sometimes it kicked me out of the classroom, whereas my internet at home is fiber internet."*

Regarding structural problems, teachers stated that they had problems in the areas of dependence on external factors, communication, absenteeism, inability to conduct measurement and evaluation, digital security, and digital ethics. Stating that distance education is affected by many undesirable external factors, T6 said: *"The battery runs out, the electricity cuts off, even when a potato seller or onion seller passes by the door, it reflects on the children, because you cannot turn off the external sound."*

Teachers generally consider that communication between teachers and students is often limited in distance education. They state that the positive structure of face-to-face education on communication motivates both students and teachers positively. In this regard, T1 said: *"I think nothing can ever replace face-to-face communication, no matter how much these things develop. Sometimes I tell children that in this age there are unlimited resources, if internet access is provided to everyone and education continues remotely, the cost of education will decrease, but it can never match the vitality of the school, the school atmosphere is something different, adapting to society is learned here, acting in accordance with society, addressing the teacher, addressing friends, etc."*

Teachers reported that students were more absent in distance education and that assessment and evaluation could not be done in a healthy way. Regarding this situation, T3 said: *"Assessment and evaluation in virtual environment is not healthy, it is not reliable. I could not measure how much my students actually learned".* It is not possible for teachers to apply assessment tools effectively and reliably via computer.*"*

T4, one of the teachers who stated that digital security and digital ethics problems can be experienced in distance education said: *"I can experience digital security and digital ethics problems. Students can take a photo of the teacher and share it on different platforms. Sometimes children's writing option is on and swearing words may suddenly appear on the screen, or they may share a different image."* Students face a security and ethical problem every time they spend time in front of the screen. In distance education, it is thought that especially students who are in adolescence in terms of age may face some security and ethical problems along with behavioral disorders. Teachers stated that there may be problems in terms of access in distance education in terms of students' access to the internet and digital tools. T5: *"Tablets were distributed in order to improve distance education, but tablets do not mean much if there is no internet in them. Students have a certain quota and when they exceed that quota, they cannot access."* It should be considered that distance education can be equally effective for all students, especially with full access to digital tools and the internet.

3.7 Social studies teachers' opinions on distance education and face-to-face education preferences

This chapter analyzes and presents the opinions of social studies teachers about their preferences for distance education and face-to-face education in detail. In the interviews, almost all of the teachers think that face-to-face education is more effective and convenient in terms of educational activities. They see distance education as a supportive element of face-to-face education and they have stated that the highest level of efficiency will be obtained when used in this way. In addition, they argued that the implicit dimension of face-to-face education is very different and that schools not only provide children with education, but also develop behaviors and values, thus preparing them to be active citizens of society. They also believe that distance education is not appropriate at the primary and secondary school level and can be used more at the high school and university level.

T1*: "The priority should always be face-to-face education. Because we cannot think of education only as academic success. Social learning, affective learning, students' memories, social cohesion are very important for school. At school, students communicate with us, communicate with their friends, learn to act collectively."* T2*: "School*

culture is very important for children." T3: "Distance education can be used as a type of education that supports face-to-face education."

T4, one of the teachers who expressed the opinion that education can continue as a mixed distance and face-to-face education said: *"It can be mixed education, both distance education and face-to-face education. It can be face-to-face learning, maybe, the theoretical part can be done remotely at home, and the practical part can be left to the school. With experiments, maybe with various games, we can actually make schools more fun."* The planned use of distance education and face-to-face education when and where they are strong can be effective in increasing the effectiveness of education and student achievement. Instead of thinking completely as distance education or completely face-to-face education, an education method that blends both systems was also suggested by the teachers.

4. Discussion

This study, focusing on social studies teachers' opinions on distance education as an alternative to face-to-face education in the post-pandemic period, examined all aspects of distance education in a holistic manner. According to the results of the study, the differences between distance education and face-to-face education were analyzed in 5 different categories. These are physical differences, social differences, time and space differences, differences in the use of materials and differences in skills training. According to teachers' views, distance education differs from face-to-face education mainly in terms of physical and social characteristics. The fact that the courses are held online in a computer environment and that face-to-face interaction and eye contact cannot be established also brings along some social differences. The low level of communication and socialization in distance education leads to differentiation in student and teacher behaviors. In this respect, student-teacher interaction, teachers' classroom control, student interest and student feedback are limited. In some studies (Alharthi, 2020; Başaran et al., 2020; Hebebci et al., 2020; Kırıkçı et al., 2022), the limited interaction in distance education activities is among the negative opinions. Kaya (2002) argues that distance education differs from face-to-face education in terms of some features. The most fundamental difference in distance education is that teachers and students are in separate places. In this respect, distance education is more flexible and requires constant motivation of students since interaction cannot be established.

In distance education, the type of materials used in the courses differs, and the development of skills in students is limited compared to face-to-face education due to the lack of interaction and practice. In this respect, it is extremely important to prefer face-to-face education in teaching subjects that require interaction and practice.

The effects of distance education and face-to-face education on the teaching process were analyzed in 5 different categories. These are classroom management, communication with students, use of materials, class participation and time management. According to the teachers, classroom management is artificially easier in distance education. With the opportunities offered by technology, the teacher's control over the classroom is artificially stronger. However, although this situation seems positive, it may cause some problems in practice. In Özdoğan and Berkant's (2020) research, teachers stated classroom management as an advantage under the sub-theme of learning environment functionality. Social studies teachers evaluate distance education as unfavorable in terms of communication. They believe that there are some individual differences in communication and that middle school students in adolescence do not communicate, especially due to their shyness. In addition, it was also reported that some technical problems in distance education negatively affect communication. Technical problems such as connection problems negatively affect the teaching process and teaching experiences in distance education in different ways. Arat and Bakan (2011) also reported that the difficulties encountered in communication in distance education negatively affect education.

Teachers stated that the use of materials is more advantageous in the distance education process, that these materials are mostly digital materials, and that physical materials cannot be used. The teachers indicated that they can access many materials during the lesson, especially through Google and Youtube, and that teaching materials are used more frequently in distance education due to the ease of access and display. Pregowska et al. (2021) noted that distance education has many advantages, especially fast access to materials. In the study conducted by

Özdoğan and Berkant (2020), teachers considered the inability to use physical materials in distance education as a disadvantage. The fact that the materials used in distance education are interactive materials that students can interact and feel more will positively affect teaching. Uçar (2016) also determined that the design, visuals, interaction and exercises used in distance education increase students' motivation towards the course.

Class attendance in distance education is often lower due to the limited access to digital tools and the internet. In the digital age we live in, it is imperative that digital tools and the internet are made widely available, especially for educational purposes. In the digital age, children use technology not only for entertainment and personal purposes, but also for research, learning, information, career and developing technology skills (Ardıç & Altun, 2017). Considering that access to the internet may not be possible for every student during the compulsory distance education period due to Covid-19, TRT EBA TV was established and educational activities were carried out through television (Emin, 2020). Teachers think that distance education is convenient in terms of time management but can be interrupted due to some external factors. Since the number of stimuli is more limited in distance education compared to face-to-face education, there is less lost time during the lesson. With the start of the lesson, the teacher can make a quick introduction to the subject in front of the screen and does not deal with routines as in face-to-face education. Therefore, they can use the time allocated for the lesson more effectively. Burke and Dempsey (2020) state that a significant amount of time is saved in distance education due to the practicality of resources and learning plans.

Social studies teachers consider that distance education decreases student achievement. They stated that face-to-face education is the most appropriate method for learning and distance education should be used as a supportive element of face-to-face education. We can see that student success in distance education is 10 to 20 percent lower than in face-to-face education (Bawa, 2016). Adnan and Anwar (2020) state in their study that online learning is not as effective as traditional face-to-face learning. Teachers reported that low academic achievement in distance education is due to the lack of classroom climate, teacher monitoring, teacher reinforcement, peer learning, competition and social activities.

According to the teachers, distance education provides convenience, financial savings, time savings and the ability to use technology for teachers. In addition to these for students, they stated that it offers the opportunity to repeat and reinforce lessons. In a study by Özdoğan and Berkant (2020), teachers also mentioned that distance education provides the opportunity to watch over and over again thanks to its time-independence.

From the teacher's point of view, the opinions on the disadvantages of distance education are as follows: difficulty in monitoring students, teacher-centeredness, inability to communicate with students, inability to socialize and inability to cooperate. From the student's point of view, it consists of the codes of not being able to socialize, not being able to communicate correctly, not being able to develop skills, not being able to develop values, inequality of opportunity and lack of practice. In a study by Kırıkçı et al. (2022), 57 percent of teachers found distance education methods and practices disadvantageous in terms of field education. Distance education also has a significant disadvantage in terms of communication, cooperation and socialization for teachers and students. Students who can communicate and cooperate with their teachers and peers in face-to-face education may become isolated in distance education. In the time spent in front of the computer, students are mostly informed about the content at the theoretical level. The 21st century educational approach of learning by doing and experiencing is not possible in distance education. In addition, it is very difficult for students to acquire some skills and values in distance education.

Social studies teachers face technical problems, structural problems and access problems in distance education. Teachers indicated that they mostly experience connection failures regarding technical problems. In terms of structural problems; they have difficulties with dependence on external factors, communication, absenteeism, inability to conduct measurement and evaluation, digital security, and digital ethics. Studies (Demir & Özdaş, 2020; Özdoğan & Berkant, 2020; Kırıkçı et al., 2022) have found that measurement and evaluation in distance education cannot be carried out adequately. The study conducted by Adıgüzel (2020) determined that teachers tend to use the measurement and evaluation methods used in face-to-face education in distance education. Considering that the measurement dimension as well as the teaching dimension of education is very important in

terms of directing teaching, it is extremely important to conduct studies on the development of measurement and evaluation in distance education. It is also important to address the issues of digital security and digital ethics and to conduct studies in these areas. The security of users in the digitalizing world requires new and comprehensive measures. In terms of digital morality, it is very important to take rapid measures to solve possible problems, especially in a system where children are involved.

This study evaluated teachers' preferences for distance education and face-to-face education and found that face-to-face education is more effective and convenient in terms of educational activities. Teachers see distance education as a supportive element of face-to-face education. Teachers were of the opinion that the implicit dimension of face-to-face education is very different and that schools not only provide children with education but also develop behaviors and values, thus preparing them to be active citizens of society. Teachers also believe that distance education is not appropriate at the primary and secondary school level, but can be used at the high school and university levels.

Acknowledgments

References

Adıgüzel, A. (2020). Salgın sürecinde uzaktan eğitim ve öğrenci başarısını değerlendirmeye ilişkin öğretmen görüşleri [Teachers' views on distance education and evaluating student success during the epidemic process]. *Milli Eğitim Dergisi*, 49(1), 253-271. doi: 10.37669 / milliegitim.781998

Adnan, M., & Anwar, K. (2020). Online learning amid the Covıd-19 Pandemic: Students' perspectives. *Journal of Pedagogical Sociology and Psychology*, 2(1), 45-51. http://www.doi.org/10.33902/JPSP. 2020261309

Agnoletto, R., & Queiroz, V. (2020). *COVID-19 and the challenges in Education.* Retrieved from https://www.researchgate.net/publication/340385425_COVID 19_and_the_challenges_in_Education

Alharthi, M. (2020). Students' attitudes toward the use of technology in online courses. *International Journal of Technology in Education (IJTE), 3*(1), 14-23.

Arat, T., & Bakan, Ö. (2011). Uzaktan eğitim ve uygulamaları [Distance education and its applications]. *Selçuk Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Meslek Yüksekokulu Dergisi*, 14(1-2), 363-374.

Ardıç, E., & Altun, A. (2017). Dijital çağın öğreneni [The learner of the digital age]. *Uluslararası Sosyal Bilgilerde Yeni Yaklaşımlar Dergisi*, 1, 12-30.

Bakioğlu, B., & Çevik, M. (2020). Covid-19 pandemisi sürecinde fen bilimleri öğretmenlerinin uzaktan eğitime ilişkin görüşleri [Opinions of science teachers on distance education during the Covid-19 pandemic*]. Electronic Turkish Studies*, *15*(4), 109-129. https://dx.doi.org/10.7827/TurkishStudies.43502

Başaran, M., Doğan, E., Karaoğlu, E., & Şahin, E. (2020). Koronavirüs (Covıd-19) pandemi sürecinin getirisi olan uzaktan eğitimin etkililiği üzerine bir çalışma [A study on the effectiveness of distance education, which is the result of the coronavirus (Covid-19) pandemic process]. *Acedemia Eğitim Araştırmaları Dergisi (AJER)*, 5(2), 368-397.

Bawa, P. (2016). Retention in online courses: Exploring issues and solutions - A literature review. *Sage Open*, 6(1), 1-11.

Burke, J., & Dempsey, M. (2020). *COVID-19 Practice in primaryscholls in Ireland Report*. National University of Ireland Maynooth, Ireland. Retrieved from https://www.into.ie/app/uploads/2020/04/Covid-19-Practice-in-Primary-Schools-Report-1.pdf

Creswell, J. W. (2019). *Nitel araştırmacılar için 30 temel beceri [30 essential skills for the Qualitative researcher]* (H. Özcan, Translation). Ankara: Anı.

Creswell, J. W. (2015). *Nitel araştırma yöntemleri – Beş yaklaşıma göre nitel araştırma ve araştırma deseni [Qualıtatıve ınquıry – research desıgn – Choosing among five approaches]* (M. Bütün, & S. B. Demir, Translation). Ankara: Siyasal.

Demir, F., & Özdaş, F. (2020). Covid-19 sürecindeki uzaktan eğitime ilişkin öğretmen görüşlerinin incelenmesi [Examination of teachers' opinions on distance education in the Covid-19 process]. *Milli Eğitim Dergisi*, *49*(1), 273-292.

Dinçer, S. (2016). Bilgisayar destekli eğitim ve uzaktan eğitime genel bir bakış [An overview of computer assisted education and distance education]. *Adana, Seyhan, Türkiye.*

Emin, M. N. (2020). Koronavirüs salgını ve acil durumda eğitim [The coronavirus epidemic and education in an emergency]. *Seta Perspektif*, 268, 1-4.

Hebebci, M. T., Bertiz, Y., & Alan, S. (2020). Investigation of views of students and teachers on distance education practices during the Coronavirus (COVID-19) Pandemic. *International Journal of Technology in Education and Science (IJTES)*, 4(4), 267-282.

Holmberg, B. (1995). Theory *and practice of distance education* (Second edition). London: Routledge.

İşman, A. (2011). *Uzaktan eğitim [Distance education]*. Ankara: Pegem.

Kaya, Z. (2002). *Uzaktan eğitim [Distance education]*. Ankara: Pegem.

Kırıkçı, A. C., Arıkan, İ., & Çetin, G. (2022). Sosyal bilgiler dersine giren öğretmenlerin uzaktan eğitime yönelik görüşlerinin incelenmesi [An ınvestıgatıon on the vıews of teachers about dıstance educatıon ın socıal studıes course]. *Milli Eğitim Dergisi*, *51*(234), 1683-1708.

Kırık, A. M. (2014). Uzaktan Eğitimin Tarihsel Gelişimi ve Türkiye'deki Durumu [Historical development of distance education and the situation in Turkey]. *Marmara İletişim Dergisi / Marmara University Journal of Communication*, 73-94, 21.

Ministry of National Education [MoNE]. (2022). *Milli Eğitim İstatistikleri Örgün Eğitim [National education statistics formal education]*. Retrieved from https://sgb.meb.gov.tr/www/icerik_goruntule.php?KNO=460

Mulenga, E. M., & Marban, J. M. (2020). Is COVID-19 the gateway for dijital learning in mathematics education? *Contemporary Educational Technology*, 12(2), ep269.

Özdoğan, A. Ç., & Berkant, H. G. (2020). Covid-19 pandemi dönemindeki uzaktan eğitime ilişkin paydaş görüşlerinin incelenmesi [The examınatıon of stakeholders' opınıons on dıstance educatıon durıng the covıd-19 epıdemıc]. *Milli Eğitim Dergisi*, *49*(1), 13-43.

Patton, M. Q. (2015). *Qualitative evaluation and research methods*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Pregowska, A., Masztalerz, K., Garlinska, M., & Osial, M. A. (2021). Worldwide journey through distance education – from the post office to virtual, augmented and mixed realities, and education during the covıd-19 pandemic. *Education Sciences*, 11, 118. https://doi.org/10.3390/educsci11030118

Toquero, C. M. (2020). Challenges and opportunities for higher education amid the COVID-19 pandemic: The Philippine context. *Pedagogical Research*, 5(4).

Uçar, H. (2016). *Uzaktan eğitimde motivasyon stratejilerinin öğrenenlerin ilgileri, motivasyonları, eylem yeterlikleri ve başarıları üzerine etkisi [The effect of motivational strategies in distance education on learners' interests, motivations, action competencies and achievements]* (Doctoral Thesis). Retrieved from the National Thesis Center of the Council of Higher Education. (Thesis No. 432497)

UNESCO. (2022). *UNESCO'S education response to COVID-19*. Retrieved from https://www.unesco.org/en/covid-19/education-response/initiatives

Uşun, S. (2006). *Uzaktan Eğitim [Distance education]*. Ankara: Nobel.

Yıldırım, A., & Şimşek, H. (2013). *Sosyal bilimlerde nitel araştırma yöntemleri [Qualitative research methods in the social sciences]*. Ankara: Editions Seçkin.

Yin, R. K. (2009). *Case study research: Design and method* (4th. ed). Sage

WHO. (2022). *WHO's Response to Covıd-19, 2022 Mid-Year Report*. Retrieved from https://www.who.int/publications/m/item/who-s-response-to-covid-19-2022-mid-year-report

WHO. (2020). *WHO director-general's opening remarks at the media briefing on COVID-19*. Retrieved from https://www.who.int/director-general/speeches/detail/who-director-general-s-opening-remarks-at-the-media-briefing-on-covid-19---11-march-2020

Zhong, R. (2022). *The Coronavirus Exposes Education's Digital Divide*. Retrieved from https://www.nytimes.com/2020/03/17/technology/china-schools-coronavirus.html