TEACHERS' VIEWS ON THE USE OF INTERACTIVE EDUCATION WEBSITES IN SOCIAL STUDIES CLASSES

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Abstract : This study aims to determine the views of teachers on the use of interactive education websites in social studies classes This study aims to determine interactive education websites used by teachers in social studies classes according to their views. Participants were asked about their opinions on the education websites they used in social studies classes, the benefits to students and teachers, and the problems encountered. The participants of the study were 18 classroom teachers working in the city center and districts of Afyonkarahisar Province in the spring term of the 2015–2016 academic year. Criterion sampling, a purposeful sampling method, was used to determine the participants. A phenomenological design, a qualitative research method, was used and data collection was conducted by using a Semi-Structured Interview Form prepared by the researcher. A content analysis technique was used to analyze the data. The data analysis showed that the interactive education websites used by the teachers in their classes were mostly Morpa Kampüs and Okulistik, Vitamin and partially, EBA. The study found that the teachers reported that the use of interactive education websites in social studies classes offers many benefits to teachers and students.

Keywords: Social studies, class teacher, interactive education websites

Introduction

Today, information and communication technologies are used intensively, and it is unquestionable that knowledge accumulation is increasing each passing day and it is necessary to make greater use of this resource. Along with globalization, the circulation of knowledge and the need to make better use of it have led to the development of information acquisition technologies, such as the Internet (Şahan, 2005). The Internet, the largest communication network used by individuals to acquire, produce and share information, has begun to be used in numerous fields such as education, healthcare, government, industry, and defense. The use of Internet in education has caused many changes. The use of the Internet is continually increasing and Internet-based education has gradually come into prominence. In Internet or Web-based education, teachers and students can connect to their class material via a computer connection, whenever they want and wherever they are. In Turkey, the aim is to form an association between education and technology, as necessities of the information age. In the 2010–2014 strategic plan (MNE, 2009), the Ministry of National Education aimed to enable all schools to have Internet access, to make information technology classes common, to prevent inequality in access to the Internet and, therefore to provide a student-oriented and project-based education for the use and dissemination of new technologies. It is inevitable that teachers will benefit from technology in their classes. Social studies education supported by technology plays an important role in obtaining information that is impossible in conventional classes, and in the acquisition of various skills. It is necessary for today's teachers to benefit from technology in order to increase primary school students' opportunities to learn in social studies classes, and to enable them to establish a connection between past, present and future (Mason, 2000). Today, children's use of technology and the Internet for education and entertainment is increasing. Students benefit from technology in many areas, such as Internet research, and access to videos, images, search engines, maps, social media and games. Because social studies contain the subjects of many disciplines, technology should be used in these lessons as much as possible.

Teachers can develop their students' global awareness, using various effective, appropriate and authentic educational technologies (Crawford and Kibry, 2008). In a study in which Brad et al. (2015) planned to teach social studies subjects via video games, an increase was observed in the children's skills of problem solving, motivation, interest and goal setting and planning. Also, it was found that students better understood concrete concepts and theories used in real life. Marcus et al. (2010), stated that movies play an important role in teaching historical subjects in social studies lessons and should be used by teachers as they enable students to acquire the skills of historical empathy, interpretation and analytical thinking.

In a study conducted by Yeşiltaş and Kaymakçı (2014) to determine the technological dimension of a social studies teaching program, it was found that these programs are structured in a way to provide the opportunity to use technological products in terms of their general purposes, content, learning–teaching processes and assessment–

evaluation tools and methods. Having technological knowledge, as well as field knowledge and teaching skills, affects teachers' views on the inclusion of educational technologies in classes (Crawford and Kibry, 2008). The lack of knowledge and skill in the use of technology in social studies classes leads teachers to teach their lessons in conventional way. The teachers' use of technological applications in their lessons is associated with their skills and self-efficacy in using technology (Friedman and Heafnee, 2010). In Turkey, interactive education software has been produced that can incorporate video, images, documentaries, animations, cartoon movies, and caricatures on subjects in social studies and other education, in compliance with each grade level. The number of teachers who use this kind of software is increasing daily. This study aims to determine the views of teachers on the use of interactive education websites in social studies classes This study aims to determine interactive education websites used by teachers in social studies classes according to their views. Participants were asked about their opinions on the education websites they used in social studies classes, the adequacy of these educational websites, the benefits of using these websites to students and teachers, and the problems encountered. Answers were sought for the following questions:

1. What are the views of classroom teachers about the adequacy of different educational websites that they use in social studies classes?
2. What are the views of classroom teachers about the stage of the social studies class at which they use interactive education websites?
3. What are the views of classroom teachers about why they use different education websites in social studies classes?
4. What are the views of classroom teachers about the benefits to teachers of using different education websites in social studies classes?
5. What are the views of classroom teachers about the benefits to students of using different education websites in social studies classes?
6. What are the views of classroom teachers about difficulties they encounter while using different education websites in social studies classes?

Method

Research Design

A phenomenological design, a qualitative research method, was used in the study. Phenomenology examines the real nature of a phenomenon (Patton, 2014). The aim of phenomenological research design is to reveal the experiences and perceptions of individuals about a phenomenon and the meanings they attribute to it (Yıldırım and Şimşek, 2013). Phenomenological research defines the common or shared experiences about a phenomenon or concept (Creswell, 2015). It focuses on how individuals describe phenomena, what they think about them, how they perceive them and attribute a meaning to them. In this research design, in-depth interviews should be conducted with individuals who have directly experienced the relevant phenomenon, in other words, have experiences about it, in order to collect data (Patton, 2014). In the present study, the phenomenological design was considered as a method which provided an opportunity to assess the interactive education websites used by the teachers in social studies classes, to determine why and how they use them, and the problems they encounter and recommended solutions.

Participants (Study Group)

The participants of the study consisted of 18 teachers working in the city center and districts of Afyonkarahisar Province in the spring term of the 2015–2016 academic year. The criterion sampling method, a purposeful sampling strategy that enables all cases fulfilling some criteria to be selected, was used to determine the participants. Purposeful sampling methods are used to increase transferability in qualitative researches with the aim of revealing incidents and facts, and their features of variability (Yıldırım and Şimşek, 2013). In purposeful sampling, cases are selected for a study because they provide more information and they are enlightening. They can provide important explanatory information about the relevant phenomena studied. Cases that are rich in information provide more data for researchers (Patton, 2014). The criteria determined for participant teachers were as follows; working with fourth graders and participating voluntarily in the study. The effective factor in setting "working with fourth graders" as a criterion for classroom teachers was that there were several questions in the interview form about education websites used at this grade. Social studies classes are included in the fourth-grade curriculum in primary school, requiring the classroom teachers to work with fourth graders. The information about the 18 participants who constituted the study group is showed in Table 1.

Table 1. Information about participants

Variable		f
Sex	Female	9
	Male	11
	Total	**18**
Seniority	0–10 years	4
	11–20 years	9
	21–30 years	3
	30 and above	2
	Total	**18**

Data Collection and Data Collection Tools

The data were collected using a Semi-Structured Interview Form which was developed by the researcher and consisted of 9 open-ended questions. In qualitative research, a semi-structured interview is a commonly used data collection method when the researchers want to analyze a subject in detail and to better comprehend the responses given (Harrell and Bradley, 2009). A Semi-Structured Interview Form with 11 open-ended questions was prepared on the basis of a literature review and given to three experts in different departments of a faculty of education in a state university who examined it to ensure its internal and external validity. These classroom teaching experts were asked to ensure the scope and face validity, and to check whether the questions in the interview form were clear and understandable, and that they involved the topic discussed. As a result of the expert review, two questions were judged to be inappropriate to the research topic and were excluded from the interview form. After the necessary adjustments were made in accordance with the experts' opinions and comments, an interview form consisting of 9 open-ended questions was developed. Later, a pilot interview was conducted with a classroom teacher. An assessment was conducted after this interview was written down, which showed that the questions were understood clearly by the participant.

Data Analysis

The content analysis technique was used to analyze the data. In content analysis, the data obtained in a study is subjected to an in-depth analysis, in order to develop concepts and themes. The process of content analysis consists of stages, including data coding, finding themes which divide codes into certain categories, the organization and description of data according to codes and themes, and the interpretation of findings (Yıldırım and Şimşek, 2013). The interviews were recorded by video camera and transcribed by the researchers. All of the written interview data were coded by two researchers. The interrelated codes were classified by their similarities and differences, and the researchers decided under which sub-themes the data would be grouped and presented. These sub-themes, which were associated with each other, were combined and inserted into the main themes presented in broader dimensions. The consistency between codes established by the two researchers was calculated using the formula, [Agreement / (Agreement + Disagreement) x 100] (Miles and Huberman, 1994). As a result of the comparison between codes, the consistency between encoders was calculated as 0.88. The fact that reliability calculations were found to be above 70% was regarded as reliable for the study (Miles and Huberman, 1994). Code names (T1, T2, T3 ...) instead of the teachers' names were used in direct quotation to support the results obtained.

Results

Information about the interactive education websites mostly used by the teachers in social studies classes is shown in Table 2. Later, the participants' comments and direct quotations about the adequacy of these websites were also presented.

Table 2. The most used interactive education websites in social studies lesson

The most used education websites	Frequency
Morpa Kampus	13
Okulistik	8
Vitamin	5
Eğitim Bilişim Ağı (Education Information Network)	2

As can be seen from Table 2, it was found that the interactive education websites mostly used in social studies classes were Morpa Kampus, Okulistik and Vitamin. The participants reported that these websites are compatible with the acquisitions in social studies teaching programs and they are quite adequate. Also, the participants emphasized that these interactive education websites are highly professional and they are appreciated by their students. Moreover, it was also reported that Eğitim Bilişim Ağı (Education Information Network) is not used

often in social studies because its content is inadequate and complicated, and is incompatible with the acquisitions in social studies teaching programs and is not intended for primary school programs in particular.

The participant teachers reported that the websites such as Okulistik and Morpa Kampus are professional and commonly used in social studies classes. One of the participants, T4, said, "*The websites like Okulistik and Morpa, which were created more professionally, are important sources for me in social studies lessons, therefore I find them quite practical.*" Another participant, T12, also said, "*The interactive websites that I use most in social studies and find useful are Morpa Kampus and Okulistik, respectively. These websites go in parallel with the subjects that we teach in lessons. I think they are adequate and it is easy to use them.*"

The participants also emphasized that the other interactive education website used in social studies classes is Vitamin. One of the participants, T2, said that, "*My students are pleased when they see me opening Vitamin. Videos, images, and particularly exercises in this website work a lot for me. I find these websites adequate.*"

Another participant, T1, reported that EBA does not have any content related to primary school programs and it is not used often in social studies and other classes because its usage is complicated compared to other websites. He/she said, "*The passwords of EBA were also given to us, but I cannot use this website because it is not yet adequate. The data in this website are inadequate because accurate and proper data for primary schools have not been uploaded to the website. I find Morpa Kampus adequate for those who want to use it in terms of visual aspects and information because it offers an opportunity to project books on the interactive whiteboards.*"

From the teachers' views, it can be stated that they use mostly the Morpa Kampus and Okulistik education websites in social studies classes, and that the newly-developing EBA program is not preferred because it does not follow the lesson content and acquisitions exactly.

Information about the most commonly used and liked categories of the interactive websites in social studies classes is showed in Table 3.

Table 3. The most commonly used and liked categories of the interactive websites

The most commonly used and liked categories	Frequency
Audible and animated video lectures	16
Assessment exams	12
Homeworks	10
Interactive activities	8
Worksheets	8
Games	2
Music	2
Documentaries	2
Images	2

As shown in Table 3, the category most used by the teachers in social studies classes was audible and animated videos that are based on lectures. The classroom teachers were also found to use images, animations, assessment questions and activities.

One participant teacher, T15, reported using video lessons, saying that, "*There are video lectures created in accordance with each subject of the lessons and their acquisitions. First, I have students listen to these lectures. I deliver the subject by myself sometimes, by pausing the video lecture or after it ends, and reinforce the subject with questions.*"

The participants also reported that they use assessment exams in particular. They emphasized that they use tests prepared for each unit or theme, subject screening tests prepared for each subject, and mid-term and end-of-year assessment tests. It was also reported that the assessment questions are so useful and professional that they facilitate the work of teachers. One of the participants, T2, said, "*I like assessment categories most on these websites. In the past, we were working hard and it was so difficult and time-consuming for us to prepare questions accurately according to subjects and units. The exam questions in these websites have been prepared and arranged so professionally that they attract the students' attention. I can easily reach the subjects that I deliver in the lesson. I use animations and exam questions categories a lot, particularly for social studies classes, because it is a verbal class.*"

Information about the most commonly used category of the interactive education websites in social studies classes is showed in Table 4.

Table 4. The most commonly used category of the interactive education websites in social studies classes

Stages of the lesson	Frequency
At all stages of the social studies lesson	**12**
Measurement and Assessment	**12**
Worksheets	6
Exercises	2
Tests	2
Subject revision	2
Drawing attention	**8**
Video	6
Music	2
Learning and teaching process	**7**
Lecturing	3
Animation	3
Games	1
Documentary	1

The participants reported that they use interactive education websites at almost all stages of the social studies lesson. In parallel with the results above, the teachers use interactive education websites mostly at the measurement and assessment stage of the social studies lesson. The participants reported that they use assessment exams (worksheets, exercises and tests) and audible and animated video lectures with the aim of subject revision at the end of the lesson. On this matter, one teacher, T6, said, *"I use these materials at the end of the lesson to reinforce what is learned and to make a general revision."* Another teacher, T18, said, *"I use these materials to conduct a revision at the conclusion stage of the lesson and to summarize the subject,"* while T9 said, *"I use these materials at the assessment stage of the lesson for the subject."*

The participants also reported that they use video and music in the second place to draw attention at the introduction stage of the class. One teacher, T15, said, *"I use these materials to attract my students' attention to the subject at the introduction stage of the lesson. I start the lesson sometimes with a song, narration or lecture-based videos. Afterwards, I proceed to the next stage with the textbook."*

The participants stated that they use video lectures, animations, games and documentaries in the learning and teaching process. On this matter, one teacher, T5, said, "*I use the education websites that enable students to become active and participate actively in the learning–teaching process, instead of following and listening to their teachers passively, at the development stage of the social studies lesson. I enable my students to watch the videos on these websites and do exercises. I use documentaries prepared for the social studies lesson, particularly regarding the subjects in the unit, 'I am learning my past'."*

Information about the subjects of the social studies lesson most commonly used in the interactive education websites is showed in Table 5.

Table 5. The subjects of the social studies lesson most commonly used in the interactive education websites

Subjects Used	Frequency
Turkish War of Independence	18
Elements of National Culture	16
Natural Disasters	16
Non-Governmental Organizations	14
Environmental Pollution	10
Developments in Science and Technology	10
National Holidays	9
Introducing other countries and cultures	3
Our individual differences	2

As can be seen in Table 5, the teachers stated that they use the education websites for almost all subjects. They also reported that they benefited mostly from the videos and documentaries related to the Turkish War of Independence within the context of history subjects in social studies classes. The participants also emphasized that they use animations and documentaries in particular for the subjects including elements of national culture, natural

disasters, non-governmental organizations, environmental pollution, developments in science and technology, national holidays, introducing other countries and cultures and our individual differences. On this matter, one of the participants, T6, said, *"Social studies is a verbal lesson, thus I benefit from documentaries generally for historical subjects, especially regarding the Turkish War of Independence, but I also try to use these materials for almost all subjects such as natural disasters, cultural elements from past to present and environmental issues."*

Information about the benefits to the teachers offered by the use of interactive education websites in social studies classes is showed in Table 6.

Table 6. Benefits for teachers of interactive education websites

Benefits for teachers	Frequency
Enabling teachers to be prepared	16
Enabling teachers to prevent the lesson from being monotonous	14
Providing convenience	10
Enabling teachers to draw their students' attention more easily Enabling teachers to reach a large number of examples and images, and further information about the subject	9
Providing teachers with a large number of materials (video, animation, activity)	8
Increasing the teacher's control over the lesson	7
Enabling teachers to concretize the subjects	5
Enabling teachers to reach measurement and assessment sources easily	5

As can be seen in Table 6, the teachers reported that using these websites in social studies and other classes enables teachers to be well-equipped and better prepared for the classes. They also stated that these websites enable social studies classes to be more entertaining, and less monotonous, and that they make it easy for teachers to access the intended information. The participants also emphasized that these websites enable teachers to access relevant information, images, examples, videos, activities, tests and exam questions for measurement and assessment appropriate to each subject. It was also stated that the high number of these sources increases the control of teachers over the classes, enables the subjects to be reified, and improves the motivation of students.

One of the participants, T18, offered the view that these websites enable teachers to be better prepared, saying, *"We could not always access various sources while preparing for the lessons in the past, but now there are materials available, prepared in accordance with the class subjects. The availability of these materials, from video lectures to exam questions, facilitates our works and enables us to be prepared for the classes."* One of the participants, T3, reported that the interactive education websites offer convenience to teachers and assist them, and that they also provide teachers with a large number of material. He/she said, *"They make giving lessons easy for teachers. They provide teachers with a large number of materials and enable them to come to school prepared."* Another teacher, T16, said, *"They provide teachers with different and rich content. They provide us with educational materials which are prepared in accordance with technology."*

One of the participants, T14, reported that using interactive websites enables students to enjoy the class, helps teachers hold their students' attention, and it prevents the lesson from being monotonous. He/she said, *"If I use various games and animations in the lesson, it stops being monotonous. In this respect, I think these websites enable social studies lessons to be enjoyed and listened to with interest by the students; thus, our work gets easier."* On this matter, another teacher, T8, said, *"Using the lecture method, the students become distracted after a while; therefore, these websites become helpful for teachers by enabling them to provide lessons easily."*

One of the teachers, T2, stated that the interactive education websites concretize what teachers teach and enable them to increase their control over the lesson. He/she said, *"Their benefits are considerable if a teacher finds subject-oriented materials for what he or she wants to teach in these websites. They can deliver the abstract concepts in the lesson concretely by using these websites. Therefore, it facilitates the teachers' work, allows them to establish control over the lesson, offers diversity in lecturing and enables teachers to make lessons entertaining, rather than boring.* On this, another teacher, T11, said, *"Thanks to the activities on them, these websites are useful in making the lesson entertaining, giving concrete examples and holding the students' attention."*

One of the participants, T5, reported that the interactive education websites provide teachers with a convenient way to hold their students' attention by saying, *"I think that different education websites are very useful for teachers to teach social studies. They enable us to mentally prepare the children for the lesson and most importantly, draw their attention to the subject. I also think that these websites help teachers enable students to comprehend what is taught..."*

Information about the benefits to the students offered by the use of interactive education websites in social studies classes is shown in Table 7.

Table 7. Benefits for students of interactive education websites

Benefits for students	Frequency
Enabling permanent learning	15
Drawing attention	12
Leading to individual learning	10
Enabling students to be motivated	10
Enabling students to enjoy social studies classes	8
Enabling students to recognize that they can obtain information in different ways	
Enabling active participation	5
Learning to learn	4
Supporting the students with different learning styles	3
	2

According to Table 7, the participants reported that the use of interactive education websites in social studies classes has various benefits for students, such as enabling permanent learning, drawing their attention, leading them to individual learning, and enabling them to be motivated. They also stated that teaching the lesson by using these websites causes children to like it, enables them to learn the different ways of getting information whenever and wherever they want, and helps them to learn by experience. Moreover, they emphasized that these websites contribute to "learning to learn" by enabling students to access information whenever they want, at their own pace, and to assess themselves by activities and questions, and that they help teachers reach children with different learning skills. On this, one of the participants, ST5, said, *"Students have difficulty understanding abstract concepts. These websites deliver concepts by concretizing them and enabling permanent learning because they appeal to students in both visual and audial ways. Students can get information for their research assignments or preparation for the next class by themselves, without the help of their teacher thanks to different websites. I think these websites are also useful for students because they try to enable students to acquire information in different ways."*

Information about the difficulties encountered while using interactive education websites in social studies lesson is showed in Table 8.

Table 8. Difficulties encountered while using interactive education websites in social studies classes

Difficulties faced	Frequency
Internet outage and low-speed internet connection	15
Inadequate number of activities	10
Inconsistency between the acquisition requirements in the program and the content on the websites	5
Not updating the websites according to the changes in the program	4
Some of the websites require students to pay membership fees	2
The content and usage of some websites is complicated	2

As can be seen in Table 8, Internet outage and low-speed internet connection are the difficulties most faced by classroom teachers. Apart from these, they also reported that they encounter difficulties, such as inadequate number of activities for the subject, inconsistency between the acquisitions in the programs and the content on the websites, websites not reflecting promptly changes in the programs, some websites requiring students to pay membership fees, and the fact that it is complicated to use some websites.

One of the participants, T1, reported having difficulty connecting to the Internet. He/she said, *"I have always difficulty while opening websites, and sometimes I encounter difficulty with the Internet connection. Because of these problems, I fall behind in teaching subjects and I have to teach lessons in simpler way."* Another participant, T3, said, *"I have difficulty with slow Internet speed and outages."* One of the participants, ST5, reported on the inadequacy of content and activities: "*The difficulty that I most frequently encounter is that some of the websites are inadequate in terms of content. Although our textbooks have tens of acquisitions, it is impossible to find a video or animation for each acquisition. I also encounter websites which are inadequate not only in terms of delivering lectures, but also educational games or assessment...*"

Conclusion and Recommendations

This study aimed to determine teachers' views on the use of different interactive education websites in social studies classes This study aimed to determine the use of different interactive education websites in social studies classes according to the views of teachers. It found that teachers generally use these websites in their lessons and they find them adequate. This study also showed that these interactive education websites are highly professional and that they are appreciated by the students. Moreover, it was found that Eğitim Bilişim Ağı (Education Information Network), which is quite new for the primary school level, is not used often in social studies because its content is inadequate and complicated, and it is incompatible with the program acquisitions and it is not intended for primary school programs in particular. Açıkalın (2010) observed that teachers use websites in social studies classes.

The category on the interactive education websites most frequently used by the teachers for social studies classes was found to be audible and animated video lectures. Tests prepared for each unit or theme, subject screening tests prepared for each subject, and mid-term and end of year assessment tests are also other materials that teachers use most frequently. Moreover, assignments, interactive activities, worksheets, games, music, documentaries and images prepared in accordance with each subject on the interactive education websites are also used and preferred. In a study conducted by Çetin (2010), students reported that the high number of elements, such as activity, experiment, game and animation, within the content of classes delivered using web-supporting teaching methods, makes them happy; the high number of questions in the content provide reinforcement; and web-based teaching can be conducted without constraints in time and place. Based on the study results, the use of interactive education websites by teachers in their classes should be made more common and teachers should be encouraged to use them.

It was found that the teachers use the interactive education websites mostly for the subjects including the Turkish War of Independence, elements of national culture, natural disasters, non-governmental organizations, environmental pollution, developments in science and technology, national holidays, introducing other countries and cultures, and our individual differences. The participants reported that the use of documentaries about historical subjects and videos about natural disasters is effective. Furthermore, images and videos, which contain elements of national culture, and introduce non-governmental organizations and explain their activities within the context of current events, are also used in the lessons. Images for environmental pollution and videos for raising environmental awareness are also used. It is highly important for teachers to include interactive education websites within the content regarding different disciplines in social studies classes so that the social studies education becomes effective and efficient.

The participants reported that using interactive education websites in social studies classes and other lessons enables teachers to be well-equipped and better prepared, makes social studies classes more entertaining and prevents them from being monotonous, and offers convenience to teachers by enabling them to access the intended information more easily. Moreover, the participants emphasized that these websites enable teachers to access relevant information, images, examples, videos, activities, tests and exam questions for assessment appropriate to each subject, increase the control of teachers over the classes, enable the subjects to be reified, and increase the motivation of students.

In a study conducted by Çiftçi, Taşkaya and Alemdar (2013) to determine the opinions of classroom teachers on the Fatih Project, it was found that using Internet software and tablets in education facilitates teachers' access to information, offers a large number of materials and simplifies teachers' work in several aspects, and consequently helps them save time. All teachers should be oriented and encouraged to use these websites. Most of the teachers using EBA reported that the biggest contribution of the platform in terms of its positive effects on teachers is that it positively affects the motivation of students for the lesson because it increases visuality (Türker and Güven, 2016).

The teachers reported that the use of interactive education websites in social studies classes has various benefits for students, such as enabling permanent learning, drawing their attention, leading them to individual learning and encouraging their motivation. The participants also stated that teaching social studies classes by using these websites causes children to enjoy the classes, enables them to learn the different ways of getting information whenever and wherever they want, and helps them to learn by experience. In a study "Exemplary Social Studies Teachers Use of Computer-Supported Instruction in the Classroom," conducted by Açıkalın (2010), the participants emphasized that the use of computers in social studies classes facilitates students' work and enables them to learn faster. In the same study, most of the participants emphasized that the Internet is very useful because it enables students to gain global and multiple perspectives. In a study conducted by Heafner (2013), the teachers emphasized that it is absolutely necessary to use technology in social studies classes because it makes learning

meaningful for children, motivates them to learn, enables them to learn in accordance with their own pace and interests, develops their research skills, and helps them learn by associating the social studies concepts with their lives. In an experimental study based on web-supported teaching, Çetin (2010) found that web applications improved the academic achievement of students significantly and increased their motivation towards the lesson.

Internet outage, inadequate number of activities and inconsistency between content and acquisition are the main difficulties faced by the teachers while using these websites. In a study titled "Secondary Social Studies Teachers' Perceptions of Effective Technology Practice," conducted by Heafner (2013), the participants stated that they experienced difficulties such as Internet outage in social studies classes, which causes loss of time while trying to follow curriculum. The sub-structural deficiencies in schools should be corrected to use these websites in an effective way. Also, the contents of these websites should be developed, organized and updated.

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