

**WHAT DO TEACHER CANDIDATES THINK ABOUT THE
TEACHING EDUCATION? THE EXAMPLE OF SOCIAL STUDIES
TEACHER CANDIDATES**

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Abstract:

In this research, it is aimed to reveal the opinions and observations of social studies teacher candidate about the courses they have taken during their 4-year university education. The focus group interview was used as the data collecting tool, and the content analyses were performed on the data obtained. The criterion sampling approach was used for selecting the participants, and being in the senior year and having a grade-point average of 3 or above were accepted as the criteria. 15 teacher candidates participated in the research and the data were collected in 2013. The researcher's observations and determinations were mentioned as well as the participants' views. According to the findings obtained, it is seen that social studies teacher candidates did not develop a positive attitude towards the 4-year education they have received in the social studies teaching undergraduate program in general. The participants reported that the following factors were important for the formation of this negative attitude and view: the fact that they were not informed sufficiently about the aims of the courses, the hesitation whether the information they acquired at the courses in the professional life, and the fact that the courses they take were not associated adequately with the concept of social studies and today. The participants stated that the instructors did not use enough materials and give the due importance to the courses. From the researcher's point of view, the following observations are among the important results of the research: the teacher candidates do not attend the social studies education due to the system, they explain the problems they experience with external reasons, they do not make enough efforts to improve themselves professionally, the university does not provide healthy opportunities for this improvement, and therefore, these affect the teaching education of social studies teacher candidates negatively.

Key words: Social Studies Teacher Candidates, Social Studies Undergraduate Program, Teaching Profession.

INTRODUCTION

The concept of education has an extremely important place in human life. Human is a living being that continues to learn from birth to death. The education continues at schools formally, in the family, at the streets, in the social circle, on the internet and in several non-governmental organizations informally. The understanding of education may vary across the

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governments since the culture, religion, manners and customs of every nation is different. In this sense, education cannot be considered independently from the cultures of the nations.

Education is an art of creation at one point (Duru, 2004). The individual becomes a part of the society with education (Kağıtçıbaşı, 2010). In this respect, education is also an art of upbringing. Each school, in this term, constitutes a factory. The most important product to be manufactured is human. The better the individuals of a society have been brought up — if they have chosen a profession suitable for their talents, respect others' rights and freedoms and give confidence, respect and love to others — the more likely that society is healthy and peaceful. Education can help social peace restored; this may be the biggest benefit of education to the society.

The innate behaviors of people are limited when they are born to maintain their lives and meet their needs; people must acquire certain skills and values to lead a life. Within this context, many things the individuals have learnt as of the moment they were born carry the signature of others generally (Başaran, 1992). The others here are primarily the family members, social circle and school because the individual is affected by the surroundings and affects the surroundings. This interaction is in the nature of socializing, being a human.

Schools are important social institutions for the socialization of an individual. With the education given at schools, individuals can acquire lots of information, skill and value they need. When it comes to school, it is the whole in which there are students, teachers, educational programs, administrators, a physical environment and school staff. Within this whole, since teachers affect other elements, the qualities of teachers have an important role also in the quality of the education (Şişman, 2000; Çelikten, Şanal and Yeni 2005; Tonga, 2012; Hanushek, 2011; Clotfelter, Ladd and Vigdor, 2007). Teachers use teaching methods and strategies and apply the educational programs. And teachers make direct contact with students. The teacher represents the school and educational programs in this sense. Therefore, the qualities of teachers who are the appliers of educational and teaching programs have a great importance in reaching the requested goal. This quality formally starts to shape with the education received at university.

The attitudes of the instructors, the use of teaching method and materials, the classroom and school environment, the quality of the students and the topic contents affect that teacher candidates receive a qualified education (Kaymakcı and Akbaba, 2014). It should be stated here that the teacher is not the only responsible factor of student's achievement or failure. The family, social circle, mental ability of the student and the quality of the

school are among the factors affecting the achievement (Harris and Sass, 2011).

It is important for reaching the specified goals that teacher candidates are brought up in accordance with the qualities and needs of the era and society we live in. Teachers must have a positive attitude towards and competences about the teaching profession so that they can play their role best (Kaymakçı and Akbaba, 2014). No doubt the teaching education has an important role in the formation of this attitude and competence.

Today, teachers are not the only specialists who transfer knowledge anymore and have become counselors who steer the students and the learning for revealing the preliminary information, correcting the wrong parts, achieving the information, questioning, analyzing and building new information (Işık, 2014; Yılmaz, 2013). In addition, it has also become one of the duties of schools and teachers that changes in scientific, technological, political and social areas are brought in the new generations (Kıncal, 2007).

As a result of the studies on the educational programs started at the beginning of 2000s, a constructivist approach was adopted in Turkey. One of the basic features of the constructivist approach is that it takes the student as a basis in the learning. However, the fact which should not be forgotten and neglected is that it is the teachers who actualize the programs on the paper and are personally the executer of those programs. That is why it is also the teacher who will center the students, consider them as individuals and give the value they deserve (Tonga, 2012).

Before looking at the social studies teaching education program, it is important in terms of making the subject clearer that we emphasize the concept of social studies. Social studies are a course emerged in the United States of America. There are many definitions to the concept of social studies, but they commonly underline the concept of educating good citizens (Barr, Barth and Shermis 1977; Ross 2006; Garcia and Michaelis 2001). According to Sunal and Haas (2010), social studies benefit from social sciences for the citizenship education in the process of educating citizens.

Social studies are taught at the 4th grade at primary schools and 5th, 6th, and 7th grades at secondary schools in Turkey. Some of the subjects included in the social studies lesson are: Democracy and human rights, communication, individual and society, country's history, geography, global contacts and universal human values (MNE, 2005).

The social studies teachers to teach the social studies lesson at secondary schools in Turkey are entitled to be teachers after graduating from the social studies teaching department at universities' faculty of education. The social studies teaching undergraduate program is composed of 8 terms.

Courses are divided into three topics: professional teaching knowledge (pedagogical formation), general culture and content knowledge (Ata, 2007).

In terms of the teaching education, it is seen that the social studies teaching programs is still in use with the changes made in 2006. To outline the programs, over 80% of the courses are theoretical and rather history and geography weighted. And the duration of the teaching practice (internship) was increased to 2 terms as it had been 3 terms before 2006. In addition, almost every discipline that forms the social studies is included in the social studies teaching undergraduate program (Tonga, 2012).

When the studies on the social studies teaching education are evaluated, it is seen that there has not been sufficient studies performed on the undergraduate education to assess the education which the social studies teacher candidates take while they are conferred on many subjects. It is therefore aimed with this study to make up a deficiency even if it is small. In this sense, it is expected that this study will serve as a resource for the program renewal studies to come. Since well-educated social studies teachers will help good citizens raised, the quality of teaching education also bears great importance.

1. METHOD

Research Design

The research was planned as a qualitative one in the screening type and the phenomenology design was used. The phenomenology design focuses on the phenomena which we are aware of but do not have a deep and detailed insight on (Yıldırım and Şimşek, 2008). The phenomenology design was preferred in this study because it is aimed that elements of which the educators are aware but which cannot be noticed in a detailed way.

Participants

The best data resources for the phenomenology research are the individuals or groups that live the phenomenon on which the research focuses on and give or reflect deep information about that phenomenon (Yıldırım and Şimşek, 2008). While selecting the participants, the criterion sampling method was used. The grade-point average was considered to be the first criterion in the selection of participants and the teacher candidates who have an average of 3 and above over 4 were chosen. The second criterion is to be in the senior year. The reason why the senior teacher candidates were chosen is to ensure they took all the courses; the reason why high grade-average point was preferred is that it is desired to work with teacher candidates who have healthier and conscious information on the courses.

The participant group of the research is 15 social studies teacher candidates who are in their senior year at Gazi University, Faculty of Education, and Social Studies Education in the 2012-2013 academic year. Firstly, the general academic averages of the senior students were obtained since the criteria of being in the senior year and having an academic achievement were taken into consideration while determining the participant group. Next, the teacher candidates were provided with the explanations about the study. They were told that the participation in the study was on voluntary basis and their name would not be mentioned in the study. Then 15 social studies teacher candidates with higher grade-point averages than others who wanted to participate in the study were identified and the participant group was set.

The details about the participants are given below.

Table 1. Information Related to Participations

Teacher Candidates	Gender	Grade	Point averages
TC1	F	4	3,2
TC2	F	4	3,4
TC3	F	4	3,2
TC4	M	4	3,5
TC5	F	4	3,6
TC6	F	4	3,4
TC7	F	4	3,3
TC8	M	4	3,3
TC9	F	4	3,2
TC10	M	4	3
TC11	F	4	3
TC12	M	4	3,5
TC13	F	4	3,6
TC14	F	4	3,5
TC15	M	4	3

5 of the participant senior social studies teacher candidates are male, 10 of them are female and their grade-point averages vary between 3 and 3.6.

Data Collecting Tool and Collection of the Data

Semi-structured interview was used for collecting data among the qualitative research data collecting techniques. The reason why the interview was preferred is to identify teacher candidates' opinions on the subject in a more detailed way. So, focus group interviews were performed with 3 different groups. While determining the interview questions, the literature was consulted for the social studies program and the problems of teacher candidates. Assistance of 1 social studies educator and 1 assessment and evaluation specialist was received to determine the questions. The measuring tool was finalized with the feedback from the specialists.

After preparing the measuring tool, a pilot application was conducted on the group to measure whether the questions collected enough data. During this process, the questions were tested and it was decided that the questions in hand are sufficient to collect valid and reliable data.

The research data were collected from three different groups of five people on three different days in May one week before the final exam week late in the 2012-2013 academic year. The focus group interviews were conducted face-to-face in the garden of university cafeteria in a silent environment and lasted for 55 minutes, 60 minutes and 75 minutes respectively.

The permission of the participants was asked to use a voice recorder during the interview so that a healthy analysis could be performed on the data obtained and the details would not be neglected. All of the participants stated that there was no harm to record the interviews via a voice recorder.

Data Analysis

The content analysis method was used in the analysis of the data. Firstly, the interviews recorded on the voice recorder were decoded into a written text. And then, the interview texts were read and coded. Themes were achieved through the codes. About 15 days later, the texts were reread, and codes and themes were recreated. A part of the interviews was submitted to 1 field educators and they were asked to reach the codes and themes. Next, the researcher's analyses and the analyses of the field educators were compared and similar themes were directly taken while different themes were assessed, and the analyses were finalized.

2. FINDINGS

It is seen in the analysis of the questions asked to the social studies teacher candidates that themes are divided into three topics: the quality of the courses, the instructor and the internship. These themes, the subthemes composing the themes and the related opinions of participants are stated below.

a. The Quality of the Courses

The social studies teacher candidates take about 65 courses in 4 years which are total 8 terms. The answers given by the participants about the social studies undergraduate program which attract attention most are the ones about the courses.

The teacher candidates reported that they were uncomfortable with the fact that the courses they took at the university within the scope of the teaching education were generally theoretical. While they thought that they developed a positive attitude towards the applied courses in which they perform activities and benefit from them, they stated that the courses which only depends on information, in which the instructors just tells about it and they do not perform any activities, and they could not remember enough of the subjects. In this sense, the teacher candidates stated that the theoretical courses are too much, and they cannot find enough opportunities about applying the acquired information as follows:

"I see most of the courses we take as a waste of time. We certainly have to know some things as social studies teachers. It is basic information but it is ridiculous to enter into so much details. I am not going to be a history teacher. I am not going to be a geography teacher. Then why do I have to take so much history and geography courses? TC1"

"There are a lot of repeater courses.TC3"

"They talk about application but where is it really? I look at the courses we take now. There are some called "applied"; they are really productive but at some courses, our instructors did not have any contribution. They took the book, and distributed the subjects. TC5"

"The courses in which we carry activities were productive but we did not have applied courses much. We took the teaching courses theoretically. For example, the classroom management course... I mean, the classroom management course should have been thought in an applied classroom environment with everyone's participation. We were taught theoretically and got done with it. TC6"

"We took the social sciences that form the social studies only theoretically; it would have been more effective if it had been applied. For example, we took the archaeology course but we did not go to an excavation or an excavation site. TC7"

The other opinion of the participants about the courses is their suspicion about whether the information they acquired will be useful in their professional life. It is expected from the teacher candidates that they will use the information they get from the university education in their professional life. The participants reported that they think a great part information which

they acquired at the courses at the university will not be useful in their professional life in future. The related opinions of the participants are mentioned below:

"For example, we took the Ottoman History course theoretically. Our instructors could have made suggestions like 'you can teach this subject to your students this way' or 'you can use this method to make the course more fun'. TC9"

"We took lots of courses but we took the secondary school social studies teaching program course in our senior year and it was elective. I think I met the social studies program so late. TC11"

"While studying, we keep thinking how this course will be useful for us. TC12"

"We had some instructors... The instructor sent us an e-mail including the lesson plan. It said 'this course involves this, that; you'll learn these, you'll gain that. Only a few instructors of ours were like this. This style was very effective for us. TC13"

"The secondary school social studies program should be given more place. TC14"

"I do not have any idea about how I will teach this subject when I will start my teaching profession. TC15"

It was stated that the social sciences have an important role in the formation of the concept and content of the social studies in the conceptual framework. It is also seen that the social sciences that form the social studies are given a place in the undergraduate program in terms of the teaching education. However, the fact that the courses given are not associated with the concept of social studies is perceived by the participants as a deficiency:

"I don't remember that, for example, our instructor came to the class and said 'you'll use this course at the social studies course this way. TC2"

"At most of the courses, the instructors didn't teach the lesson by associating it with the social studies. TC10"

"There is an interdisciplinary approach in the social studies. We're learning it with a single approach. We're looking at it generally. The history course should be given in an interdisciplinary way. Sociology, psychology, anthropology... We took all these courses. But when we went to the class, we learnt them like they are a single discipline. We didn't associate them with other disciplines. TC8"

Every university must implement the plan prepared by the Council of Higher Education for the program in Turkey. The universities have the

liberty only about the elective courses. The participants stated that they feel uncomfortable with the fact that the elective courses they took were history, geography and citizenship knowledge. They also reported that they named those courses as "compulsory elective courses" among themselves. It is seen that the teacher candidates are uncomfortable with the successive courses with the same contents.

"We took the citizenship knowledge course. Then they decided that it was an elective course. We're now in our senior year, it's an elective course again. It's not elective but compulsory elective. TC4"

"Either the history is elective or the geography or the citizenship knowledge course. TC3"

"Other elective courses were given as compulsory elective. That was bad. TC1"

The teacher candidates reported that the information they took was old and it was a deficiency not to associate it with today in terms of their education.

"There's no actuality in our courses, especially in our program. We're looking at the secondary school course books; we're trying to keep it up-to-date with the news from papers. When I look at the education we take, it's always one pattern. That event occurred in history; there are mountains and plains in geography. TC8"

"I don't think the actuality stands out in the courses we take. TC1"

"The actuality is very important. It's very important to pass the things about the social life to students. When there's no actuality, the education is a far cry from the daily life and stays theoretical. TC 11"

b. The Instructors

The opinions of the participants on the course are followed by the instructors who teach the courses. The participants made evaluations about the methods used and the importance attached to the course in terms of the instructors.

When the opinions of the participants about the issue are examined, it is seen that they expect from the instructors to use different methods and techniques at the courses. They especially associated with the constructivist approach and shared the following thoughts:

"Our instructors don't focus on how to teach the students but what to teach us. TC12"

"We took the course which is four credits, but our instructor didn't even show one single map or via the projector. TC3"

"Some instructors used the slide projector; that was it. Some of them reflected it on the board and only read the presentation. TC9"

And it is seen that the participants decides whether the instructors attach importance the course with the methods they use. The examples of the participants' opinions are below:

"I'm curious about something: on what criteria are the instructors chosen to give the course? I've been curious about this for four years. Maybe it is me, but I don't really remember most of the education I took at the courses. TC6"

"The instructor used to move the chair to the middle a little bit, sit back and chat like hell. He would tease someone when he was bored. TC5"

"The instructor thinks the program is unnecessary. He doesn't even care. What can this instructor give us? What kind of contribution can he make to us? What can an instructor who doesn't like the program and thinks it's unnecessary contribute to us about the program? TC15"

c. The Internship (Teaching Practice)

The last theme that forms the opinions of the participant is the internship. The social studies teacher candidates in Turkey go to the secondary schools for the internship within the scope of the teaching practice in the senior year. They both make observations there and start to acquire experience at firsthand about the teaching profession by performing activities at the classes. And they find the opportunity to observe the school, teachers and students and benefit from the practice teacher's experiences.

It is seen in the answers of the participants that they emphasize that they did not receive enough feedbacks within the scope of the internship at the schools. In this sense, the teacher candidates stated that they could not understand what they did well and what their deficiencies were. Some of the answers are given below:

"I think the internship is inadequate in terms of feedback. The most important in the learning is that the students know their deficiencies. We do internship but we don't know what we do right or wrong. TC2"

"There's no feedback. I wish there was. If our instructors could have examined our internship and told us our deficiencies or emphasized our good aspects, the internship would have achieved its purpose. TC5"

"Teachers provide us with feedbacks in the micro-education. At the last class I taught for example... The teacher came to the class to observe me. He took notes about me and told me my deficiencies and what I did well. I saw what I did wrong there. This feedback broadened my horizon. TC8"

It is seen that the teacher candidates accept the internship as very important in the teaching education. And they reported that a good internship is possible with a good practice teacher.

"I do internship. My practice teacher should be more qualified. He teaches with traditional methods. This is over now. I would like the teacher to have adopted the constructivist approach. I would like the practice teachers to be more idealist, the people who will set an example for us. TC12"

"In the first term, the way our practice teacher taught the lesson was like: "Son, stop. Girl, you take over." She would just make them read the book. The internship did no good in the first term; we just had to do it. TC13"

"Our practice teacher considers the constructivism as 'Yes, children. Turn the page and we'll answer the question on it. Let's discuss it.' This is constructivism for them. TC4"

"The interdisciplinary relation is very important in social studies. We do internship, but we can't see an interdisciplinary relation at the classes because the teachers are generally history-or geography-origin. TC14"

"I don't know their batteries are flat or something, but there's a professional burnout in question. It's like they don't have any expectations. The teachers came here from Ankara here; they seem to end their career here until getting retired. TC15"

In addition, the teacher candidates stated the following about the activities conducted and not during the internship:

"I've been doing my internship at the same school for about a year. All I do is to sit in the class and listen to the teacher. TC6"

"We only supervise the exams during the internship. TC1"

"The practice teachers should be checked rather than us during the internship. We're just doing errands. TC2"

"We're doing errands for the teacher. We make photocopies, prepare questions. When the teacher will go to some place, we take care of the students, call the roll and check their homework. TC8"

"I think the internship period is short. The first and second term of the senior year is just not enough for us. TC5"

It is understood from the expressions of the participants that they see what they do as errands in terms of the quality of the internship.

While the participants have based their negative evaluations about the internship on the external factors so far, they reported that they could not care the Public Personnel Selection Examination (PPSE) enough because the internship coincided with it.

"The internship would have been more effective if it had been in the third grade. TC1"

"It's too bad that the internship was in the senior year. It coincided with PPSE. TC3"

"For example, they said 'the 6-hour internship is too much for you; you are exam-oriented students. Just come for an hour.' We did it for 40 minutes each time. TC8"

"We have a trouble named PPSE. And there is the internship. We couldn't take the internship seriously due to the concern of being assigned. TC6"

It is seen that the participants has reported negative opinions on the internship so far. The positive opinions of the participants about the internship are given below:

"When we are at the university, the courses seems unproductive to us, but I start to feel that they are productive when I'm doing my internship. TC6"

"I think we're very good teachers during the internship. I feel proud with my friends and myself as I see the teachers there. I take heart. TC13"

"I didn't even notice if I was at the class or not as an intern teacher. The teacher pretended as if I wasn't there but in the second term, he included me in the class saying "Tell it to your teacher, address your teacher when you speak." In that term, I felt that I was an intern teacher. TC5"

"We started doing our internship in the first term of the senior year. My head was full of questions like "I'm taking all this theoretical information, how am I going to apply it at the class." When I had the opportunity to observe the practice teacher during the internship, I could see his wrongs thanks to the theoretical information I took at the university. TC12"

The Observations of the Researcher

The researcher worked as a research assistant at Gazi University, Faculty of Education, and Department of Social Studies Teaching between 2010 and 2013. He was also the advisor of the study group and the senior students. The duty of the advisor can be defined as helping the teacher candidates select courses, attending to students' problems and supervising

the course when the instructor is not available. Therefore, each advisor has the chance to engage with and meet their own student group. The researcher worked with the study group for 3 years. During this period, he took notes about the problems faced by the teacher candidates and had the opportunity to meet with the students face-to-face when necessary.

As the researcher, I think that sharing my opinions and observations about the issue is important in terms of the clarity of the issue. Once I analyze the notes I took and the interviews, I will present the conditions of the social studies teacher candidates about the social studies teaching undergraduate program under the topics of "the problems about the system", "the courses", "the instructors" and "the attribution to the external factors".

The Problems about the System

In the Turkish educational system when the secondary education is over, a two-stage text examination is held and the students select the universities they want to go. While some of them get into the departments they want, others select the departments even if they do not like it or have interest in it. At some point, this is considered to be the source of the problems. Almost the better part of the social studies teacher candidates reported that they selected the social studies teaching program just because their score met the requirement for the program. It can be understood that studying a program they do not like is an important factor in the formation of their negative attitude towards the program and the courses they take. This is thought to be affecting the motivation of the teacher candidates in a negative way.

The Courses

It is seen that the students have difficulty especially in the disciplines of the social sciences which form the social studies. These courses include archaeology, politics, economics, law, and art and aesthetics. For the part of these difficulties, which is related to the courses, I think the fact that the students could not acquire an adequate infrastructure about these course in their secondary educational life is important. The history and geography courses are dominant at the high schools in terms of social studies in Turkey. And the fact that educators who teach these courses were graduated from Faculties of Science and Letters, in other words, that they do not have a grasp of the social studies concept is another important factor. It is also seen the fact that the educators cannot associate the course with the social studies concept and do not emphasize the purposes of the courses will affect the teaching education negatively.

The Instructors

The teacher candidates expect the instructors to make the course more fun. They think that the reason why they are fed up with the courses is because the courses are thought only at the classes and the instructors do the speaking more. Some of the instructors complain about the students not making effort enough. Here is one detail to which should be paid attention: It was observed that the instructors who love and care about their courses and profession also care about the teacher candidates and prepare more creative activities for their development. For example, some groups are lectured by the instructors of the department; others are lectured by the teachers out of the departments at economics and anthropology course. I also observed that the course taught by the instructors of the department receive more positive attitudes by the students. The reason was that the instructors juiced up the course with activities and associated the content with the social studies course. However, it can be said that the instructors out of the faculty of education could not build a significant communication with the teacher candidates.

The Attribution to the External Factors

I observe both in the focus group interview and individual interviews I made that the teacher candidates criticize rather the courses and the external factors such as the instructors. However, there are two points that attract my attention: I cannot see that the teacher candidates make enough efforts and care about their courses and department much. They do not tend to do different activities to improve themselves in general; they are not open to the innovation. I even notice that they do not care about the homework adequately given by the instructor within the scope of the course. They have difficulty especially doing the reading homework. Moreover, it is seen that they are not willing to participate in the activities to improve themselves generally.

3. CONCLUSION and DISCUSSION

In Turkey, there have been many studies in which the participant group is composed of the social studies teacher candidates. However, when these studies are examined, it is seen that the ones which have been conducted on the opinions of the teacher candidates on the social studies teaching undergraduate program and the education the teacher candidates take are so few. The similar and related research and the result of this study are evaluated below.

It is seen according to the result of the research that the social studies teacher candidates have not developed a positive attitude towards the 4-year education they took within the social studies teaching undergraduate program. The participants reported that the reason why this negative attitude

and view were formed was the concern under "the quality of the courses" theme whether the information they acquired at the courses would be useful in the professional life, inadequate association of the courses with the social studies concept, the troubles experiences at the elective courses, insufficient actuality of the courses and inadequate association of the courses with today. When one looks at the answers of the participants about the instructors, it is seen that teacher candidates' perspectives on the instructors are important in the teaching education. Under the theme of the instructor, the participants perceive the underuse of materials by the instructors at the courses as that the courses are disregarded. And it is seen here that this perception that the instructors do not care about the courses enough affects the teacher candidates, and therefore, the teaching education.

The last theme in the answers of the participants is the internship. The short duration of the internship, its coincidence with PPSE, problems due to the practice teachers and zero feedback about the internship are considered to be important problems by the social studies teacher candidates. The study of Yılmaz and Kab (2013) on a different sample also revealed that the teacher candidates are affected by PPSE negatively because the teaching practice (internship) coincides with the exam in the senior year.

The study by Tonga (2012) seems to verify the opinion of many teacher candidates in this research. In his study on the social studies teaching undergraduate program, Tonga (2012) revealed the following as the research results: the multitude of the theoretical courses, multitude of history and geography courses, insufficiency of the internship courses and the concern whether the information acquired will be useful in the professional life and the fact that the courses taken are not associated with the social studies. Therefore, these observations are similar to participants' opinions.

In the study by Yılmaz (2009), the social studies teacher candidates reported that the instructors use the traditional approaches too much. Yılmaz associates this with the fact that the instructors lecturing in the social studies program are not aware enough of the new educational and teaching studies because they were rather graduated from the Faculty of Science and Letter. The researcher confirmed that the constructivist approach cannot be put into practice while it is taught to the teacher candidates at the theoretical level, based on the opinions of the teacher candidates.

Yılmaz (2010) revealed that the instructors have problems about the following issues: the social studies undergraduates not studying for the courses on time and regularly, their unwillingness about improving themselves intellectually, professionally, and culturally, etc., their reluctance to make enough efforts to develop themselves in their field, not setting a goal which is worth achieving. The way the teacher candidates and the instructors consider each other seems negative. When this situation is

examined it is seen how important the teacher-student relationship is. After all, the teacher candidate is still a student. Therefore, the instructor should have an important role in the motivation of the teacher candidates so that they could bear the requested values. However, it is doubtful that the students can acquire the requested quality only by attending the class as a result of the assignment criteria for the instructors, busy schedules, the fact that the university or faculty administrations do not offer adequate counselling and consultancy service. And the fact that the teacher candidates mentioned about their own deficiency in their answers shows that they rather explain the problems they experience with external factors. Nonetheless, the teacher candidates should be evaluating to what extent they discharge their responsibilities in the problems. It can be concluded here that the teacher candidates cannot criticize themselves while looking at other factors critically.

The observations of the researcher can be summarized as: The social studies teacher candidates answers no to the question "Would you have selected the Social Studies Education Program if your score had been higher?" In other words, the students selected the program because their scores were just enough for it. This may be another reason why they developed a negative attitude towards the department and its instructors. Likewise, according to Özder, Konedralı and Perkan Zeki (2010), choosing the students who love and desire the teaching profession as the teacher candidates is the first step to raise qualified teachers.

In the program, it is seen that 9 of the courses are from the history, 7 of them are from the geography discipline while the social sciences disciplines which form the social studies are given one course each (CHE, 2007). And there has been no finding about how the courses in the social studies undergraduate program renewed in 2006 are determined and which needs the courses are chosen for. Only the Council of Higher Education (CHE) mentioned the topics within the course in the explanations of one paragraph for each about the course contents (CHE 2007). In these explanations, the relationship between the social sciences and the social studies was not mentioned as the teacher candidates and Tonga (2012) emphasized. Learning the social sciences that form the social studies is extremely important, but these disciplines should be associated with the social studies. The aim should not just be to teach the social sciences, but also how to use them within the scope of the course and their relationship with the social studies.

The participants reported that they had difficulties about that many courses were theoretical. When looked at the Social Studies Teaching Undergraduate Program, 83,5% of the courses are theoretical (Tonga, 2012). This actually contradicts the definition of the teaching profession made by the Ministry of National Education. Pursuant to the National Education

Fundamental Law no. 1739, the teaching profession is "a specialized profession that takes charge in the education, teaching and related administrative duties of the state". The concept of specialization is defined as "expertise, professionalism" (TLS, 2015). Just giving information about the teaching and the low amount of practice raises question marks about the specialization. According to Calderhead (1997), the division of theory and practice and the multitude of theoretical courses have been one of the important problems in the teaching education. The multitude of the theoretical courses and the low number of the applied courses create a relation hanging on by a thread between the acquired information and the real world.

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