

**Teacher Views on Blended Learning**

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**ABSTRACT**

This study aims to contribute to the knowledge available in the literature through revealing teachers' views on blended learning. Considering that blended learning aims to integrate the positive aspects of different learning environments, it is important to determine the positive and negative situations in learning environments. In line with the purpose of the study, 20 teachers from different branches working in public schools were interviewed in the 2020-2021 academic year. Semi-structured interview questions were asked to the teachers. This research is a case study and it is in qualitative research design. Descriptive analysis approach was used to analyze the data obtained from the research. Teachers' views about blended learning were analyzed in terms of the definition of blended learning, blended learning applications, positive and negative aspects of online and classroom applications for teachers, positive and negative aspects of online and classroom applications for students, changes of blended learning environments on the teacher's role. It was concluded that online applications address more than one sense organ and develop the ability to use technology. They also provide effective communication atmosphere which positively affect both teachers and students in-classroom practices. Insufficiency in technical infrastructure draw attention as common negativity for both teachers and students in online applications. Also, it was determined that the teachers do not have enough knowledge about blended learning. Teachers should be guided about this issue with in-service training.

**Keywords:** Blended learning, teacher views, learning environments

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## Introduction

In recent years, civilization has been rapidly evolving and growing at an unprecedented rate. The final point of this transition and growth is that every area of life is penetrated by technology. This condition helps us to do many things, from our easiest activities in our everyday lives to the most difficult Internet and IT transactions. In addition, the most important point that separates the modern education system from conventional education systems is the fact that this model provides the opportunity to learn anytime, anywhere. Reaching information becomes easier as the use of technology in education increase. In addition to the diversification of educational tools and applications, solutions to existing problems in the education system can be found in this way (Yılmaz, 2018). The increasing use of the internet is the fastest progressing aspect of this new education system (Singh and Reed, 2001). The fact that shared education can be received even if the same place is not shared, that more people can be reached, different learning speeds can be addressed, and this also significantly reduces training costs are some of the positive reflections on education (Aksoğan, 2011).

According to Arkorful and Abaidoo (2015), the benefits of using digital resources in education are as follows: It provides learning without depending on time and place, offers the shortest way to reach information, increases motivation for communication and exchange of ideas, cares about individual differences, helps each learner learn at their own pace. However, taking advantage of completely online systems will deprive the learner of the communication provided by face-to-face training. At this point, blended education comes to the fore.

Blended (mixed) education is the combination of traditional face-to-face education and online technologies (Graham, 2006). Traditional education and web-based learning suitable for today's world are offered together (Garrison and Vaughan, 2008). It is defined as an educational approach that offers effective learning experiences by bringing together the most beneficial aspects of face-to-face and online learning environments, which are also expressed as "hybrid learning" or "blended learning" in the literature (Hebebcı and Usta, 2015). Considering that different learning environments have different advantages; it is reasonable that presenting these environments altogether will provide more effective and efficient teaching. However, it is not possible to limit blended learning with such a simple definition. Blended learning provides the learning environment and offers the learner the chance to choose information, repeat it when needed, and to progress at the learner's own pace. In addition to providing flexible communication between teachers and students, it also has a significant difference in terms of academic success. Despite the high number of activities implemented, its low cost is another advantage. The warm educational environment provided by face-to-face communication also exists (Ünsal, 2007). It eliminates the negative atmosphere that the disadvantage of communication in distance education creates on students (Yolcu, 2015). Blended learning can also combine traditional education with network technologies by minimizing the interaction problem of network-based learning (Mahirođlu and Usta, 2008). Blended learning approach enables course content to be presented both face-to-face and online, so teachers and students communicate both face-to-face and online, and real and virtual environments are used together (Gülbahar, 2017). Blended education offers a more effective education environment by giving place to learner-centered education and through the convenience of online education as well as the communication advantage provided by face-to-face education (Draffan and Rainger, 2006). Blended education is a system with its unique components in addition to traditional education, distance education, and online education (Oh, 2006). The online training rate in blended education is between 30% and 79%. This ratio should

be determined by considering factors such as the needs of the learner, technological possibilities, materials, and the format of the course (Allen and Seaman, 2014).

Studies conducted to evaluate blended learning revealed that students enjoy learning in a blended learning environment. With this situation, it was concluded that student participation and success would be positively affected (Akkoyunlu and Soylu, 2006). Based on the data obtained because of the study on blended education, Batdı (2014) concluded that blended education increases academic achievement more than face-to-face education. Saritepeci and Yıldız (2014) concluded that blended learning positively affects participation in the course. According to Aksoğan (2011), blended learning provides more permanence to students than face-to-face learning. In a study conducted by Ceylan (2015) about students' opinions, it was stated that blended learning contributes to students' self-discipline in terms of the time they spend in the internet environment. In another study conducted by Çardak (2012), it was concluded that blended learning had positive results on student interaction and learning levels. Karaotcu and Baran (2019) stated that most of the studies conducted about blended learning in Turkey emphasized academic success but that the teacher took a great responsibility at this point by emphasizing the configuration and preparation of the environment. In the same study, they also stated that the most examined area was computer and teaching technologies, the undergraduate level ranks first in the sample of the studies, and quantitative data analysis is mostly used as a data analysis method, and the studies for the teacher should be increased in the subject of examining the different dimensions of the research in qualitative ways and planning blended learning. The result of literature review study of Hebebcı and Usta (2015) supports these data. It was stated that more than half of the studies conducted were for undergraduate students, and the dimensions which were obtained with qualitative data were quite limited compared to quantitative data. According to Gates (1999) and Drucker (1996), the teacher is an indispensable element of the learning-teaching process. It is the one that will manage information technologies for the age we are in. It is also the teacher who develops and supervises the strengths and abilities of the learner. It should not be forgotten that the design principles should be followed, and the process should be carried out successfully. Otherwise, unwanted negative results may occur (Aksoğan, 2011). It is also the teacher who will protect the process from these negative effects. When the physical form of the elements that make up the blended learning is examined, the first place is the teacher-led classroom and teacher. It is emphasized that the student cannot learn only through technology and that learning can be achieved with the methods that the teacher integrates with technology (Singh and Reed, 2001). Success in blended learning can be achieved by combining the positive aspects of online and face-to-face learning. So, an education that lacks neither teachers nor technology is unconceivable (Ünsal, 2010).

Considering the findings obtained in the literature, it is seen that the opinions of the teachers who manage the learning process about blended learning are not given extensively. However, feedback from teachers is needed to overcome the deficiencies of the existing system. In learning processes where blended learning is used, it is seen that what is expected from the teacher is a positive attitude towards the student, attracting attention, being a guide, providing motivation, planning, and managing classroom (Çırak, 2017). This situation proves how important the role of the teacher is. However, Tosun and Özaydınlı (2020) stated in their research that teachers do not have enough information about blended learning. While some of the teachers included in the study did not attend any seminars for blended learning, those were teachers who did not find the seminars sufficient. Most teachers could not define blended learning. Some of them made the definition based on their estimates. The same study divided the teachers' opinions about blended

learning into two categories: positive and negative, and the number of negative opinions is higher than the positive ones. The positive aspects for the teacher are that their contribution to teaching skills, less workload, more examples and contents, and decrease in costs; they stated the positive aspects as investigative and independent learning for students, providing them with convenience in terms of time and information, ensuring permanent learning, and revealing creativity. The common denominators of the negative opinions expressed were the inappropriateness of the current conditions, infrastructure problems, problems in internet access, lack of technological equipment, practice problems in crowded classrooms, and lack of training of teachers. A similar study was carried out by Kırmızı and Yapıcı (2019) and revealed that most of the teachers showed a positive attitude despite the problems experienced in hardware and software. Teachers stated the reduction in the workload as a positive development and it contributed to the feedback and evaluation. Other positive aspects include increasing motivation, keeping the lesson away from boredom, and finding more repetition and practice opportunities for the student. According to the data of Bodur (2019), online applications of blended learning support and complement in-class applications. The insufficiency of questions asked by students is the weakness of online applications. According to Balcı (2017), teachers will be pleased to carry out the learning-teaching process with blended learning. Following online instructions are easier than doing face-to-face training for students. Although the teachers show a positive attitude regarding the benefits it will provide, they stated that there would be various problems in terms of implementation. Also, they expressed that the variety of online applications will cause each teacher to perceive blended learning differently.

Teachers' in-service training for blended learning and their close relation to computer technologies and their understanding of its increasing importance day by day will also affect this situation. The fact that blended learning combines the traditional and modern understanding of education under a single approach emphasizes the importance of examining it in all aspects as well as the limitations of existing studies. Studies that generally address the undergraduate level and focus on online applications reveal the importance of the research. This study aims to obtain data that will broaden the limited knowledge in the literature and help to ensure the most effective application of blended learning with the opinions of teachers who are blended learning practitioners. Besides, it is thought that the teachers' opinions about the different application environments of blended learning will shed light on the further studies to improve the positive situations and eliminate the negative situations. The question "What are the teachers' views on blended learning?" reveals the problem of the research. Following the main purpose of the research, answers to the following questions will be sought:

1. What are the teachers' opinions on the definition of blended learning?
2. What are the teachers' opinions about blended learning?
3. What are the teachers' opinions about the positive aspects of blended learning online for the teacher?
4. What are the teachers' opinions about the positive aspects of blended learning in-class applications for the teacher?
5. What are the teachers' opinions about the negative aspects of blended learning online for the teacher?
6. What are the teachers' opinions about the negative aspects of blended learning in-class applications for the teacher?

7. What are the teachers' opinions about the positive aspects of online applications of blended learning for students?

8. What are the teachers' opinions about the positive aspects of blended learning in-class applications for students?

## **Method**

### **Research Pattern**

The qualitative research approach was used to obtain the answers to the questions for blended learning. Qualitative analysis refers to a holistic methodology in which qualitative methods of data collection are used to analyze the subject or incidents under examination in their natural setting (Yıldırım and Şimşek, 2018). In qualitative research, the researcher talks to people about their experiences and perceptions. A researcher can formally conduct a personal or group interview. Detailed field notes are collected through observation, interviews, and document reviews. Raw data obtained from these notes with the content analysis notable theme, category, and narrative description readable separated and illustrative examples of situations become be inhibitory. Qualitative data captures and conveys a person's world experiences in one's own words (Patton, 2018).

This research is a case study, and it is in qualitative research design. The most distinctive feature of the case study is the in-depth investigation of one or more cases. The factors related to the situation investigated (environment, individuals, events, processes, etc.) are investigated within the framework of a holistic approach and focus on how they affect the relevant situation (Yıldırım and Şimşek, 2018). The situation examined within the scope of this research is the opinions of teachers on blended learning.

### **Participants**

The research was conducted with 20 teachers from different branches who work in public schools in the 2020-2021 academic year. The purpose sampling method, one of the non-probabilistic sampling methods, was used to determine the sample (Gürbüz and Şahin, 2014). Purpose sampling, according to Patton (1987) allows for an in-depth investigation of situations thought to contain rich information (Yıldırım and Şimşek, 2018).

The purpose sampling method was preferred since it was necessary to benefit from the teachers who had taught using the blended learning approach to obtain the most efficient results in determining the teachers' views on blended learning. Participating teachers were coded as T1, T2, T3... T 20. The demographic characteristics of the participants are presented below.

50 percent of the teachers participating in the study were primary teachers, 10 percent were Turkish teachers, five percent were history teachers, five percent were preschool teachers, five percent were English teachers, five percent were guidance and psychological counseling, five percent were music, five percent were mathematics and five percent were science teachers. 55 percent of the teachers who participated in the study had five years and less service time, 15 percent had 6-10 years of service, and 30 percent had 21 years and more. 95 percent of the teachers participated in the study work in the city center and 5 percent in the village. None of the teachers participating in the study have attended in-service training or courses for blended learning.

## **Validity and Reliability of the Study**

The validity is that the data collection tool that will provide similar results on similar groups can fully reveal the reality (Maxwell, 1992). According to Kirk and Miller (1986), validity means that the researcher observes the phenomenon which he/she investigates as it is and as objectively as possible.

On the other hand, reliability is the acquisition of information obtained from research with different researchers (Marvasti, 2004). The studies carried out to ensure validity and reliability in this study are mentioned below.

Opinions of an academician who specializes in qualitative research and conducts studies in the field of instruction and curriculum were received to prepare and develop the interview form to be used in the study. The same academician confirmed that the interview form represents the subject to be investigated. The research was conducted by obtaining detailed feedback on each section. Approval was obtained from the teachers who participated in the study.

While determining the study group of the study, the purposeful sampling method was considered to ensure the best representation of the universe. The interviews were carried out at times appropriate for participating teachers, and the factors that could affect the research results were prevented. Interviews' voices were recorded to prevent data loss during the interview. Voices were recorded after the approval of all participants.

The data obtained because the interviews were coded by the researcher, the similarities, differences, and consistency between the codes were considered. To prevent research data become complicated, data not related to research questions were removed. In the stage of sharing the findings, the actual statements of the teachers interviewed were directly included. In the research, sample selection was made to increase external usability. In addition, to ensure reliability, the data was encoded by two different researchers and field experts and calculated using Miles and Huberman (1994) 's " $\text{Reliability} = (\text{Consensus}) / (\text{Consensus} + \text{Difference of Opinion}) * 100$ " formula for consensus or identification of differences. As a result of the calculation, coding compatibility between researcher and expert was 0.88.

## **Data Collection Tool**

A semi-structured interview form was used as a data collection tool in the study. In this approach, it is essential to provide the depth of knowledge by asking the participant questions previously prepared by the researcher. Preparing the questions in advance facilitates the arrangement and analysis of the answers (Yıldırım and Şimşek, 2018).

The interview form was prepared by examining national and international literature for blended learning. Care was taken to ensure that the questions that make up the interview form could be answered concerning experiences, not general and abstract expressions. Also, by making a variety of question types, open-ended questions were included in which researchers could present their opinions and experiences in detail, with closed-ended answers such as their education status, service time, location of the school where they worked, and their in-service training for blended learning. The interview form was designed to include six questions in the first section containing personal information and 12 open-ended questions in the second section, which would enable to reach data about teachers' opinions on blended learning. If the questions were not understood by the participating teachers, alternative questions were also prepared to be used to reach the required data.

In order not to hinder the natural flow of the interview, the questions were changed from time to time. If the answer to one question includes the answers to other questions, the question is not repeated. Encouraging feedback was given to receive in-depth information, but during this time, guidance was avoided. If the interviewed teacher drifted away from the subject or went into unnecessary details during the interview, his attention was redirected to the subject of the interview. The interviews were originally conducted in Turkish.

## Data Analysis

A descriptive analysis approach was used to analyze the data obtained from the research. According to this approach, the data are summarized in line with the predetermined themes. The opinions of the interviewed participants are given by direct quotation. The aim is to present the findings to the reader by organizing and interpreting them (Yıldırım and Şimşek, 2018)

In the first stage, to do the content analysis, the voice recordings obtained from the interviews were listened to and converted into a written text by giving codes to each teacher (such as T1, T2, T3). The obtained data were examined by the researcher and divided into meaningful codes. Besides, an academic expert in the field of research subject and qualitative research was asked to conduct an expert review.

## Findings

The themes and codes created from the findings obtained from the answers given by the teachers in the interview form are included in this section. The interviews were originally conducted in Turkish, then all codes and themes were created as Turkish and translated in English.

The findings of the teachers' answers to the question "What is blended learning?" are presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Theme 1: Teachers' definitions of blended learning

Codes	Frequency-Teacher Code	Quotation
No idea	(10) T2, 3, 6, 7, 8, 9, 11, 12, 19, 20	T19 - <i>"I've heard it before, but I don't know what happened."</i>
Using different learning approaches together	(5) T1, 4, 5, 14, 17	T5 - <i>"I guess ... I think that a few learning can be done by using them together."</i>
Blending distance education and face-to-face training	(1) T15	T15 - <i>"When I say blended learning, I think it's like presenting different conditions at the same time. It can be like blending distance learning and face-to-face training. But I don't know exactly. "</i>
Addressing different learning styles	(1) T13	T13 - <i>"Students can have different learning styles. Some students can learn better this way. I think it appeals to more students."</i>
Hybrid education	(2) T10, 16	T16 - <i>"I heard but I have no idea. I've heard of hybrid learning. "</i>
Blending technology and education	(1) T18	T18 - <i>"Technology is blended with the training."</i>

As seen in Table 1, most of the teachers could not express an opinion on the definition of blended learning. It is seen that some of the teachers who stated their opinions made definition key to their estimates. One of the teachers T1 said, *"I am guessing. Mixing using certain learning*

approaches. *Taking the good sides without taking away the missing parts.*” He had guessed. T4 answered the question as *“I made sense of the combination of different learnings, the use of them together”*. The opinion of T10 was *“We heard hybrid education with pandemic with online lessons.”* expressed in the form.

The questions asked to teachers were: “Do you teach by using blended learning environments together? If so, what are the applications you do? “The findings obtained from the answers are presented in Table 8. For the question “What is blended learning?”, it was reached that some of the teachers did not have information about blended learning, with reference to the findings obtained from the answers given to the question. Brief information was given before the question to avoid data loss, and thus the data in Table 2 was deepened in this way.

Table 2. Theme 2: Applications of teachers performing blended learning

Codes	Frequency-Teacher Code	Quotes
Using online applications for preparation before face-to-face teaching	(1) T14	T14 - <i>“I throw the subject that I will tell before the lesson to my students. I use it for preparation. I ensure their readiness so that they understand the importance of the issue.”</i>
Using online applications to comprehend course subjects	(18) T1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 15, 16, 17, 18, 20	T15 - <i>“I cannot do different style activities when the smartboard is not at school. But in the zoom application, I can screen share and show. I can use different materials on the subject. “</i>
Using online apps for tutorial repetition or homework after face-to-face training	(9) T3, 4, 6, 7, 8, 10, 11, 14, 19	T11 - <i>“First, I have to give it face to face, I can explain the subject and get the exercise done... it needs to be reinforced. We get used to the subject and make it practice on it.”</i>

As seen in Table 2, teachers see the online applications of blended learning as supportive of the face-to-face environment rather than being the main element of teaching. T11 stated *“cycle in-house environment I’m going to online new issues, it helps to comprehend.”* in the form. T19 said *“I give the subject in face-to-face training and do reinforcement exercises from Eba”* in the expression. The striking point here is that while the asynchronous planning of online applications is made for lesson preparation, repetition, summary, or reinforcement, synchronous lessons are generally used to transfer new information to students.

The findings obtained from teachers’ opinions about the positive aspects of online applications of blended learning for teachers are presented in Table 3.

Table 3. Theme 3: Positive aspects of online applications for teachers

Codes	Frequency-Teacher Code	Quotation
Maintain control of learning environments	(2) T13, 16	T16 - <i>"It is easy to provide discipline. You provide classroom management."</i>
Reduce the teacher's workload	(5) T2, 8, 11, 13, 16	P 8 - <i>"Whatever your field is, this is a great comfort. I can use what I'm going to show directly at that moment without having to prepare."</i>
Address multiple senses	(7) T2, 5, 8, 11, 12, 13, 15	T 2 - <i>"Visually rather than words is very important for us ... We need to include all of them."</i>
Eliminate an environmental problem	(7) T3, 6, 7, 10, 15, 19, 20	P 6 - <i>"I can reach easily because I am in my home environment. If I go to school, there are internet and infrastructure problems. We eliminate the environmental problem"</i>
Time-saving	(5) T2, 10, 14, 15, 20	T14 - <i>"We save time"</i>
Helping situations where real materials cannot be used	(2) T2, 17	T 2 - <i>"If there is a place we cannot show or go to, we can open it immediately and show it."</i>
Material, content, sample, and application diversity	(6) T1, 2, 14, 15, 18, 19	T18 - <i>"The classroom is too theoretical... I need to make an application... I have a chance to make the application."</i>
Conformity to the present	(2) T4, 11	T4 - <i>"Today, there are tablets, games, we need to see that they all exist in education. We shouldn't be behind the times. For example, we cannot just get up and use an overhead projector in the classroom as it used to be. Now we have to use the things brought by the age."</i>
Personal and professional development	(2) T3, 10	T3 - <i>"Until now, many of our teachers graduated from university and got involved with computers in terms of passing courses. But now, whether it's the internet or computer programs, teachers need to be more aware of it. He has to make more effort. Inevitably, we have improved ourselves."</i>

As seen in Table 3, various codes have been created based on the teachers' answers regarding the positive aspects of online applications. Two of the teachers stated a positive opinion about the control of the learning environment, and therefore the classroom management. T13 and T16 stated an opinion focused on classroom management. T13 stated their views on this subject as *"There may be students who do not keep quiet while in the classroom. We can silence it online."* expressed in the form. T11 stated the following about the possibility of addressing more than one sense, which the teachers stated as a positive opinion: *"They like it, whether it's digital or visual. They do not stay abstract, they become concrete. We teach them unnoticed under the name of the play."* One of the teachers who stated his opinion about the code for eliminating the environment problem, T15 said *"... I do it in the environment I want, I do not have to go to school. It prevents waste of time."* He stated that the lack of necessity to be in a certain environment also saves time. T15 mentioned that *"Students have different intelligence types, I could not make it possible to*

*appeal to all of them in school, but I am engaging attention of more students by using technology and materials.*” He mentioned that online environments offer diversity. When looking at the data obtained, it can be considered that the code to address multiple senses is due to the variety of materials offered by online environments.

The findings obtained from the teachers’ opinions about the positive aspects of blended learning in-class applications for the teacher are presented in Table 4.

Table 4. Theme 4: Positive aspects of classroom practices for teachers

<b>Codes</b>	<b>Frequency-Teacher Code</b>	<b>Quotation</b>
More effective communication	(15) T3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 20	T 17 - <i>“Face-to-face training is much more beneficial and useful to strengthen our communication and to establish a connection outside of the classroom.”</i>
Instant feedback and correction	(6) T3, 5, 12, 14, 17, 19	P19 - <i>“Children missing CPCs whether more quickly and realize the mistakes, faster I can fix it.”</i>
Don’t run the environment to work	(1) T2	S2 - <i>“We need to benefit the possibilities around us. Various activities can be done in the social environment. “</i>
Observing student feelings and thoughts	(2) T5, 8	S5 - <i>“You can contact the student face to face. You can follow the student’s emotion at that moment. The child comes to school, you can reach if he can. Making eye contact with the child... Talking about something that comes to the child’s mind at that moment... The classroom environment is very different. “</i>
Preventing unwanted student behavior	(4) T1, 3, 5, 12	S12 - <i>“It seems like it is easier for you to control the classroom. One situation did not work. It is easier for you to notice it and you can immediately turn it into something else. It’s getting more difficult on the internet. “</i>
Providing the teacher with the opportunity to improve themselves	(2) T9, 18	T 9 - <i>“In this sense, it enables the teacher to improve himself.”</i>

As seen in Table 4, teachers generally see the classroom as a more efficient communication and interaction environment. Teacher T7 said, *“The interaction in the classroom is more because it is face to face. You can understand him even in gestures because he sees each other. “* He stated his opinion in the form. T16 said, *“We communicate with students one to one.”* expressed in the form. T8, one of the teachers, drew attention to observing the students and said, *“Yes, I can see the reaction of the child from a distance, but it is up to me to be with him at that moment and to increase his reaction and to reduce it. Being in the classroom also has such an advantage. “* He stated his opinion in the form. Regarding the code of preventing unwanted student behavior, one

of the positive aspects of sharing the same environment with students, teacher T3 said, “*You can provide discipline as a teacher in the classroom.*” used the expression.

The findings obtained from the teachers’ opinions about the negative aspects of online applications of blended learning for the teacher are presented in Table 5.

Table 5. Theme 5: Negative aspects of online applications for teachers

Codes	Frequency-Teacher Code	Quotation
Insufficiencies in the technical infrastructure	(9) T1, 3, 6, 11, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18	T1 8 - “ <i>Infrastructure and connection problems always occur.</i> ”
Increased workload	(5) T3, 6, 7, 10, 14	T1 0 - “ <i>I have to find more material. In the classroom, he was teaching with a photocopy and a book. Here, more work was required in online education.</i> ”
Limiting communication	(4) T7, 8, 15, 20	T8 - “ <i>The online environment keeps us away from being face to face.</i> ”
Not reaching every student	(9) T3, 4, 5, 10, 14, 15, 16, 17, 19	T15 - “ <i>I do not think all my students have technological materials.</i> ” T19 - “ <i>We try to support them as much as possible with activities, but I cannot fix their mistakes faster.</i> ”
Inability to interfere with misconceptions.	(3) T12, 14, 19	T9 - “ <i>I am afraid of this the most, I wonder if I increase the habit of watching television?</i> ”
Screen addiction anxiety	(1) T9	T15 - “ <i>They may not have a suitable environment. Sometimes I do not even realize they’re listening to the lesson.</i> ”
Distractions in the environment	(2) T1, 15	

As can be seen in Table 5, it is concluded that most of the teachers agree on infrastructure and connection problems and not reaching every student in terms of negative features of online environments. One of the teachers, T11, “*There may be technical problems, internet may not be available. There may be trouble. Students may not adapt. Not all of them can be coordinated at the same time.*” He mentioned another disadvantage created by this negativity. Another code created based on teachers’ opinions is the increase in teachers’ workload. Regarding this situation, T6 said, “*I always send messages before starting the lesson. I am looking for them. I wake up. I must guide a few students as if their parents were me. The burden has increased on me.*” He stated his opinion as. T15 “*Not being face to face gives the feeling of talking to myself.*” He expressed the negative effect of online environments on teacher-student communication. T14’s views on the negative aspects of the online environment “*We can use it within the means and skills. Information pollution can also cause many misconceptions.*” conveyed in the form. T13 asked the question “*I think it has no negative side.*” answered as.

The findings obtained from the teachers’ opinions about the negative aspects of the in-class applications of blended learning for the teacher are presented in Table 6.

Table 6. Theme 6: Negative aspects of in-class practices for teachers

Codes	Frequency-Teacher Code	Quotation
Disciplinary problems experienced.	(5) T1, 5, 9, 16, 17	T6 - <i>“They are too much fused among themselves. In that sense, problems may arise regarding discipline. “</i>
Limitations in teaching methods	(7) T2, 4, 11, 12, 13, 15, 18	T2 - <i>“It completely restricted our methods. We will involve the child. The child will always be at the center. He will do, he will, he will tell if necessary. When it gets stuck, we’ll help. “</i>
Physical fatigue	(1) T8	T8- <i>“Because of our age group, your eye has to be constantly on top... You have to be very alert. It is tiring.</i>

As can be seen in Table 6, the negativities of the classroom environment are generally gathered around two codes: disciplinary problems and limitations in teaching methods. Teacher T9 said, *“The students are not interested in the lesson. Either they start talking to someone or start to play with the materials they have. Learning is not permanent.”* Most of the teachers reached a consensus on the limitations of the methods and techniques that can be used in the classroom. One of the teachers, T8, stated that the classroom learning environment caused more physical fatigue for the teacher and described this situation as negativity. Teachers T7 and T10 stated that the classroom environment has no negative features. Teachers T3, T6, and T20 could not express an opinion about the negative aspects of classroom practices in terms of teachers, and the data obtained were sorted out.

The findings obtained from teachers’ opinions about the positive aspects of online applications of blended learning for students are presented in Table 7.

Table 7. Theme 7: Positive aspects of online applications for students

Codes	Frequency-Teacher Code	Quotation
Addressing students with more sense organs and different types of intelligence	(4) T2, 8, 12, 15	T 12 - <i>“The possibility of learning increases. The subject would typically be complex for him, but it will close the gap as more sense organs are involved. “</i>
Providing permanent learning	(3) T2, 9, 12	T 2 - <i>“It increases possibilities and provides permanent learning. “</i>
Making the lesson more fun and interesting for the student	(6) T8, 9, 11, 13, 14, 17	Item 11 - <i>“ Intriguingly, this time staying fresh and what do we do about such Is this what will be a new game will be finished. “</i>

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More motivation and participation	(4) T4, 9, 15, 18	T9 - <i>“The boy says he has fun. He says he enjoys the lesson when we use such applications. He is more willing to attend. “</i>
Learning independent of time and place		Item 14 - <i>“ IR can look back on that moment where the stem attached.”</i>
To gain the ability to use technology actively	(10) T1, 2, 3, 5, 7, 10, 14, 16, 19, 20 (3) T2, 10, 15	T15 - <i>“We use the blessings of technology. We prepare it by making it available to students ... We should use technological tools to pass this age and keep up with the next era. “</i>

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As seen in Table 7, the code with the highest frequency among teachers’ views on the contributions of online environments to students is that learning is provided independently of time and place. In this regard, T16 said, *“Knowledge is not received only from the school teacher. They can reach more resources. The only source of information is not the teacher, it does not depend on the teacher.”* It drew attention to the awareness of students on this issue as well as ensuring that students learn independently of time and place. The T19 *“ He tries to take responsibility and enter the class on time, he is responsible for his learning. They share our responsibility.”* he also mentioned the consciousness that the student can reach the information at the desired place and time. Besides, opinions regarding continuing education even under adverse conditions were included in the learning code independent of time and place. T1 *“During the pandemic process, the possibility of being sick decreases, we reach those in quarantine. He can watch the lesson he missed and make up for it.”* and T3 *“There may be sick students who cannot come to school. At least it is important to follow the lesson. One is not get left behind. He teaches as if he was in the classroom, as in the classroom environment.”* It can be said that the perception of learning independent of time and place has two different views: ease of access to information and the opportunity to educate at any time and in any situation.

Regarding the effect of online environments on student participation, T15 *“When I ask a question in the classroom, I only get an answer from that student, but in this way, everyone attends the class simultaneously.”* made the explanation. Regarding the acquisition of the ability to use technology actively, T10 *“Children learned that education can be maintained with technology. Thanks to this, they were introduced to the concept of distance education, which we do not even think will be successful in the first place, and maybe this will encourage them because they want to realize it in the future.”* He emphasized the ability to use technology and its effect in the future.

## Discussion and Conclusion

This study aimed to receive teachers' opinions about blended learning using the case study design. The findings obtained from the opinions of twenty teachers from different public schools are presented with descriptive analysis. In this section, the results obtained based on the findings obtained within the scope of the research are included.

In the findings obtained from the teachers' opinions about the definition of blended learning, it was concluded that they did not have sufficient knowledge about the learning approach. Teachers who stated opinions made definitions based on predictions. This situation may be associated with the teachers not participating in in-service training for blended learning. All the teachers whose opinions were consulted in the study stated that they did not receive in-service training for blended learning. The study conducted by Tosun and Özaydınlı (2020) supports this situation. In this study based on teachers' opinions, it was concluded that the teachers did not have information about blended learning and that the reason for this was the lack of in-service training on blended learning by the Ministry of National Education.

In line with the findings obtained from the teachers' opinions about the performance of blended learning, it was concluded that the online dimension of blended learning was a contributor to face-to-face education rather than being the central element of the learning approach. Aksoğan's (2011) research supports this perception. Another result is that teachers consider whether the lessons are synchronous or not in the planning of online environment applications. In addition to using online environments for lesson preparation or repetition, summary, and reinforcement purposes, teachers generally transfer new information to students in synchronous lessons they perform through online platforms. Blended learning aims to achieve the most efficient outcome by taking advantage of both face-to-face and online environments. For this reason, teachers should make good plan for the situations they will use in the face-to-face classroom or online environment.

The opinions of teachers about the positive aspects of online learning environments for the teacher are gathered around the topics of addressing more than one sense, eliminating the environment problem, offering material, content, sample, and application variety, reducing the workload of the teacher, and saving time. It can be said that addressing more than one sense depends on the variety of content offered by online environments. In the literature, studies are supporting the findings on the benefits of online environments (Ceylan, 2015; Ünsal, 2007).

The most striking finding in the opinions of teachers on the positive aspects of the classroom environment, which provides the opportunity to realize the teacher-student interaction of blended learning face to face, was the more effective communication. The conclusion that Mahiroğlu and Usta (2008) reached in their study, in which they examined the effect of blended learning and online environments on academic achievement, supports this situation, that technological resources should not cause neglect of the classroom environment. Thanks to the benefits it provides face to face interaction, it also has the feature of increasing academic success.

The striking points in teachers' opinions about the negative aspects of online environments for the teacher are the impracticability to reach every student, inadequacies in technical infrastructure, increase in workload, and limitation of communication. The annoyance of the teacher about not being able to reach every student in online environments stems from the difference in the opportunities available to the students. Inadequacies in technical infrastructure include connectivity problems and limitations in internet use, and this problem is parallel to the

related literature (Mahiroğlu and Usta, 2008; Ünsal, 2010; Üstün, 2011). Although it is predicted that online environments will reduce the workload due to the variety of content and the elimination of the environment problem, teachers stated that one of the negativities at this point is the increase in the workload. Tosun and Özaydınlı (2020) stated that it is resulted from problems in teachers' use of information technologies. It can be said that while reducing workload is one of the results obtained in the question of the positive aspects of online applications for teachers, the answer to the question of the negative aspects of online applications for teachers is due to the difference between teachers' skills and experiences of using technology. Besides, seeing communication as one of the positive aspects of the classroom environment may cause it to be perceived as a deficiency in the online environment.

Teachers' negative opinions about classroom environments were expressed about limitations in teaching methods and disciplinary problems experienced. The reflection of the technological developments experienced in education has evoked awareness of situations that cannot be regarded as a problem under normal conditions. The divergence of educational environments from traditional boundaries makes it easier to encounter.

In the findings obtained from the teachers' opinions about the positive aspects of online environments of blended learning for students, the view with the highest frequency is learning independent of time and place. The fact that online learning environments provide ease of access to information and the opportunity to receive education at any time and in any situation provides learning independent of time and place. The convenience advantage in accessing the information provided by blended learning was also mentioned in the study of Uluyol and Karadeniz (2009) and this is similar with the result of this research. In the relevant literature, the same result was encountered in different studies (Batdı, 2014; Üstün, 2011). It can be thought that online applications increase motivation and participation in the lesson, making the lesson more enjoyable and interesting with reference to the findings of the research. The significant finding that Sarıtepeci and Yıldız (2014) obtained in their study examining the effect of blended learning on motivation and participation in class supports this view. A similar result can be found in Yılmaz's (2018) study. In this study, in which the advantages of blended learning were examined, it was stated that enhancing class participation took the first place. The finding of addressing more senses obtained in the opinions about the positive aspects of online environments for the teacher is also within the scope of positive aspects for the student. In the findings of the positive aspects of online learning for the student, there are also opinions that it provides permanent learning. These findings obtained Mahiroğlu and Usta's (2008) research is parallel to the line. With regard to the data obtained, online learning environments have a positive effect on the permanence of knowledge as well as academic success. Gaining the ability to use technology actively is seen as another positive outcome. In the literature, some results support this finding (Ceylan, 2005).

Teachers' views on the positive aspects of classroom learning environments for students consist of three main findings: communication, socialization, and peer learning. There are studies with similar results regarding the communication dimension (Ceylan, 2005). The fact that the classroom environments allow student-student interaction enables peer learning to take place. The finding mentioned is similar with the results of the research in the literature (Çırak, 2017; Üstün, 2011).

Major findings about teachers' views regarding to the negative aspects of the online environment of blended learning in terms of students are those not every student's having

opportunity to benefit from it, problems in technical infrastructure, inability to gain behavior, and insufficient use of technology. Not every student can benefit, and families have different conditions and possibilities. The results regarding the problems in the technological infrastructure and the insufficiency of the skills for technology use are encountered in the literature (Ceylan, 2005; Mahiroğlu and Usta, 2008; Ünsal, 2010; Üstün, 2011).

Considering the findings obtained from the teachers' opinions about the negative aspects of blended learning in terms of students, it is seen that they stated that no environment would enable the student to discover and develop their abilities and that there were many distractions. When the literature is examined, in addition to these findings, it is concluded that crowded classes cause negativity in practice (Tosun and Özyaydınlı, 2020). Also, some of the participating teachers could not accurately comment on this question of the study. It can be thought that the reason for this situation is that the traditional classroom environment is a familiar learning and teaching environment for teachers and cannot be affected negatively because of ordinary problems.

In line with the findings about teachers' views related to their teaching role in blended learning environments, teacher is not regarded as the sole source of knowledge and also teacher oriented process is no longer so focused. The results obtained are parallel to the literature in the field (Çırak, 2017; Üstün, 2011; Ocak, Üstün, and Apaydın, 2010). Blended learning can respond to modernization efforts in education with its innovative aspect within educational approaches. For this reason, it is usual to reach the results of focusing the learner on the center, not the teacher, and seeing the teacher as the guide in reaching the information, not the transmitter.

The findings obtained from the teachers' opinions about the platforms they use for blended learning, which is the last problem of the research, show that there is a limitation in this sense. It can be thought that the factors that cause this are the teachers' not having enough knowledge about blended learning and their insufficient proficiency in using technology. All the teachers in the Ministry of National Education stated that they use the system developed by the online social learning platform Education Information Network (EBA). Tosun and Özyaydınlı (2020) stated in their research results that most of the teachers did not use the EBA system. It can be said that this difference is since, in the Covid-19 process, distance education was carried out via EBA. The participant teachers stated views confirming this thought. Most of the teachers stated that they also use social networks because they provide fast communication with their students. However, it would be more appropriate for teachers to use different online platforms to increase the effectiveness of teaching.

Although it is seen that different applications of blended learning have different positive and negative aspects in terms of teachers and students, appealing to more than one sense organs and improving the ability to use technology are the common points of online applications in a positive sense. Communication is the positive common feature of classroom practices for both parties. The deficiencies in technical infrastructure draw attention to the common negativity of online applications. Blended learning is defined as an educational approach that offers effective learning experiences by bringing together the most beneficial aspects of face-to-face and online learning environments, and when all these are considered, it should be based on eliminating the negativities in planning blended learning following its purpose.

## **Recommendations**

In this part of the study, suggestions for blended learning practices are presented in the light of findings and results.

One of the most striking points in the research results is that the teachers do not have enough knowledge about blended learning. It was concluded that this was related to the fact that they did not receive in-service training for blended learning which is another result of the research. Based on these, in-service training for blended learning can be organized by the Ministry of National Education Directorate of Teacher Training and Development, enabling as many teachers to benefit as possible. Considering the limitation of teachers' use of platforms for blended learning, it can be thought that the introduction of applications should be added to the scope of education.

It is observed that teachers have problems about their competence in using technology in online applications of blended learning. For this reason, it should be worked on the goal of improving teachers' proficiency for using technology more effectively.

The level of proficiency in using technology effectively is a problem that concerns students as well as teachers. Online learning environments are above all a learning environment where students feel themselves unfamiliar. To increase the effectiveness of their teaching, students can be provided with training to get accustomed to the online learning environment, as well as opportunities to improve their ability to use technology. Students can also be provided with guidance about applications where they can access accurate and reliable information.

The teachers' facing problems because of technical infrastructure directed them to approach blended learning in a biased manner. In such cases, units can be established to minimize the problems to be experienced.

Blended learning is an approach that includes face-to-face education, based on the idea that education should not be devoid of student-student and student-teacher interaction. For this reason, studies for improving in-class applications are as important as improving online environments. Efforts can be made to eliminate the negativity of the classroom environment.

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