IJERE International Journal of Educational Research Review

International Journal of Educational Research Review

One Step Closer to Becoming a Teacher in the Shadow of the Pandemic: A Narrative Research

Berrin Genç-Ersoy[1]

Article History:
Received 24.08.2022
Received in revised form 14.12.2022
Accepted
Available online 01.01.2023

This study examines how preservice teachers experience distance/remote school practical experience through the stories they tell. It was conducted using narrative research, a standard qualitative research method, and used purposive sampling to determine the participants. The first stage of this analysis used thematic analysis; then, a holistic story was created using the Analysis of Barkhuizen and the Analysis of Clandinin and Connelly, resulting in a story titled 'Being a preservice teacher in the shadow of the pandemic' being produced. These findings reveal four consistent dimensions in the participants' narratives, namely, being a preservice teacher in the time of distance teacher training, experiencing teaching practice remotely; professional development, the challenges faced and overcoming them; the consequences of distant teaching practice; preparing for the teaching profession. In a conclusion, it is recommended that studies be conducted to improve the teaching competencies of preservice teachers who completed their teaching practice entirely through distance learning by giving them the opportunity to gain practical experience in real learning environments before starting their careers.

© IJERE. All rights reserved

Keywords: Preservice teachers, teaching practice, COVID-19 pandemic, distance education, narrative research

INTRODUCTION

The COVID-19 virus that broke out in December 2019 quickly spread across the entire world. The virus, designated a pandemic by the World Health Organization in March 2020 (WHO, 2020), has dramatically affected educational systems just as it has all areas of life, and has led to an unusual situation in that participation in classroom education is not possible. After the coronavirus cases first appeared in Turkey, there was a short break in education, and then online distance education was adopted. Although face-to-face education continues at different school levels from time to time, distance education has currently become a natural part of our education system.

Considering that distance education is a planned and programmed learning process that requires institutional organization through the use of different technologies (Moore & Kearsley, 2004), the transition to distance education at all school levels is a process that requires serious preparation. Distance education is an educational model that allows individuals of different ages and education levels to self-learn, independent of time and space, and it has many advantages and disadvantages. Although distance education offers some advantages to learners such as supporting independent and individual learning, making learners responsible for their education, offering the means for repetitive learning, providing flexibility, and creating enriched educational environments, it also comes with some disadvantages such as lack of face-to-face communication, lack of a social environment, inability to help students who do not have the means for self-learning, and inability to make good use of practical courses (Kaya, 2002).

The sudden and necessary transition from face-to-face teaching to distance teaching has also introduced many challenges and restrictions, especially in educational processes where practice is essential, such as teacher education (Carrillo & Flores, 2020; Murphy, 2020). "Integrating theory and practice, creating strong inter-institutional cooperation, providing expert/advisor teacher support in practice, research and practice-based teaching education, maintaining the balance between theory and practice, and integrating theory and practice by raising more qualified and knowledgable teachers" are among the critical considerations of teacher education (Council of Higher Education [YÖK], 2018). To achieve these goals, teaching practice courses are essential for turning theoretical knowledge into practice and gaining teaching experience (Dang, 2013; Reeves, 2017; Varela, et al., 2019).

The main purpose of teaching practice is for preservice teachers to preserviceexperience the teaching profession in educational institutions at the appropriate teaching level by turning theoretical knowledge into practice through cooperation and improve their competencies in their specific fields. To this end, preservice teachers are expected to improve their knowledge, skills, and practices and have a good idea of the teaching profession. Accordingly, preservice teachers are expected to create instructional content by designing the teaching processes individually, apply the created content in real school environments, test their

[1]TED University, berringenc@gmail.com, orcid.org/ 0000-0003-0049-4744

competencies, cooperate with the teacher and the instructor, and actively participate in the assessment process. However, as we have recently been experiencing, in addition to the expectations mentioned in conducting dramatically altered teaching practices, preservice teachers have to do their teaching practice online.

Given that teaching practice is an essential component in professional identity development (Caires, et al., 2012), it is evident that distance education experiences are critical to the professional development of preservice teachers. Studies conducted with preservice teachers during the COVID-19 pandemic have shown that distance teaching practice does not match the theoretical courses (Görgülü Arı & Hayır Kanat, 2020; Özer & Turan, 2021; Yolcu, 2020) and that the preservice teachers feel inexperienced and inadequate because the practice lessons cannot be carried out face-to-face in schools (Eti & Karaduman, 2020). As the preservice teachers' practice lessons cannot be carried out as required, the teaching profession identity is adversely affected, so preservice teachers must struggle to improve their teacher identity and competence (Delamarter & Ewart, 2020; Eti & Karaduman, 2020). Furthermore, adequate support for preservicepreservice teachers from experts/guides in conducting classroom practice remotely cannot be provided in all cases (Delamarter & Ewart, 2020; Judd, et al., 2020; Karatepe, et al., 2020; Valera & Desiderio, 2021) and preservice teachers' teaching competencies are adversely affected as a result (Eti & Karaduman, 2020). Moreover, teacher education is an exceptional professional field that requires high levels of participation, teaching practice, cooperative teaching, and peer interaction (Davidson & Major 2014), and cooperative learning is crucial in distance teacher education (Lei & Medwell, 2021). Still, it does not seem easy to provide preservice teachers with these mentioned possibilities preservicein distance education.

Technological incompetence is another challenge that preservice teachers may face in distance education (Donitsa-Schmidt & Ramot, 2020; Huber & Helm 2020), though there are some studies in the literature stating conversely that preservice teachers are technology-competent, can use web tools, and work effectively in online classroom environments (Margaliot, et al., 2018), and that they consider technological competence in their lessons conducted with students during distance education as necessary and crucial to promoting students' learning experience (Valera & Desiderio, 2021).

Preservice teachers need to be able to use technology if they are to have the skills and qualifications to select and use educational technologies effectively in teacher education. Preservice teachers need to be given the means to become familiar with advanced technologies and future teachers should be taught with the methods and tools that they will then offer to their students when teaching them (Delfino & Persico, 2007). In other words, to meet the needs of 21st-century students, teacher education programs should be designed by including teaching skills in a variety of environments that the next generation of teachers will use for their preservice students (Duncan & Barnett, 2007). However, most current traditional and alternative teacher education programs lack the capacity to educate teachers equipped with the knowledge and skills needed for distance teaching. Apart from conducting face-to-face lessons in classrooms, it has become necessary today to restructure teacher education programs and consider adding the new methods, skills, and qualifications that may be needed in the future to conduct online education (Kim, 2020). Accordingly, it seems crucial to consider the institutional infrastructure deficiencies specific to distance education and the preservicecompetencies that preservice teachers are required to possess in teaching practice.

The transition to distance education in higher education due to the COVID-19 pandemic has altered the functioning of practice courses, which are an integral part of turning out qualified teachers and forced preservice teachers to adapt to different teaching processes. Measuring the final clinical experience of preservice teachers who completed all their teaching practice courses in teacher education remotely and determining what effects distance teaching practice has on preservice teachers are topis that have not yet been studied.

Benefiting from the positive and negative experiences of preservice teachers who have done their teaching practice remotely will make the process of summarizing the points of view of preservice teachers in distance education whether related to a possible future pandemic or notmore functional. This study's findings will serve to guide policy-makers and practitioners regarding teaching practice. In this respect, we aimed to examine how preservice primary school teachers experience the period of being preservice teachers during the pandemic through their own narratives. We tried to find answers to the following research questions:

- How do preservice teachers experience teaching practice in distance education?

- How do preservice teachers make sense of being preservice teachers in distance education?
- What are the challenges that preservice teachers face in distance education?
- How do preservice teachers cope with the challenges they face?
- How does distance education affect the preservice teachers' teaching competencies?
- What are the consequences of distant teaching practices on preservice teachers?
- What do preservice teachers make of the consequences of distance education for the teaching profession in the future?

METHOD

This study is a narrative research study and examines preservice primary school teachers' experiences of distance teaching practice lessons. Narrative research is based on sharing an experienced event or sequence of events with another person or persons through stories. The main objective of this method is to examine how individuals experience the world through the stories they create themselves. As narrative research relies on stories based on life experiences and the meanings attributed to these stories, this method is a practical design to be conducted with teachers and in teacher education (Craig, 2011; Ersoy & Bozkurt, 2017; Merrill & West, 2009). This study also aims to make a story of the experiences of the preservice primary school teachers who completed their teaching practice course remotely during the pandemic period through their own narratives.

Participants

In determining the participants, purposive sampling was used to conduct an in-depth analysis of the experiences of the preservice teachers who completed their teaching practice course remotely for at least two semesters. The working group consisted of three preservice teachers studying in the Department of Primary School Teaching of the Faculty of Education. The participants' characteristics are presented in detail with their own stories.

Preservice Teacher Ediz

Ediz had to move many times during primary school education because his mother was looking for work, and therefore had to change schools and teachers. Although Ediz did well in every school he studied, he often had difficulty maintaining this success. Although he remembered almost all of his teachers in his academic life, the teacher who made the greatest impression on him was the one who encouraged him to express himself. Having experienced four different universities and four different majors during his university life, Ediz left all the majors in the first semester of school. While studying finally in the sociology department, he volunteered to take the sociology of education course and thought that education was the best way to go for him. Primary school teaching was not ranked first among his professional preferences, but it was still among his options.

Preservice Teacher Emel

Emel completed her secondary and higher education in Ankara. Emel, who has been "successful" and "responsible" throughout her academic life, has been interested mainly in mathematics. This interest made her be well known as "top of her class in mathematics" at different school levels. Emel has always got on well with her teachers and has also had good school-life experiences. While she was preparing for university exams, the loss of her grandfather, a graduate of the Village Institute, led her to make an emotional decision in her professional choice. She kept up her interest in mathematics, and this enthusiasm led her to do a double major in the department of mathematics teaching. She explained why she studied two majors as follows: "I want to ensure that students at the primary school level continue their academic achievements in mathematics in secondary school as well. I want to be fully conversant in both curricula and embody the connection between them. If I become a primary school teacher, I can do a lot for students' achievement in mathematics in the future."

Preservice Teacher Hacer

Hacer was born and raised in Ankara and lived there from kindergarten to the end of her undergraduate education. Hacer attended public school in his pre-school and primary school first-grade years and continued

all her later education levels in private educational institutions. She had been psychologically and physically abused by her primary school first-grade teacher and developed a negative attitude towards school and learning as a result. She spent some time in the United States during her high school education and tried to continue her education there. But she could not continue her education there for family reasons, so she returned to Turkey and enrolled in an IB (International Baccalaureate) school.

Having had different school and teacher experiences in primary and secondary education, Hacer often had negative experiences with her teachers. These experiences made her consider not becoming a teacher and did not give her an idea as to what a good teacher should be like. These experiences also shaped her choice of profession, and she wanted to learn how to be a 'good teacher'. Thus, she opted for primary school teaching as a choice of profession.

Research Development

After the decision taken during the pandemic to carry out educational activities in higher education remotely, discussions were raised about how to conduct teaching practice courses, which are of paramount importance in teacher education. The most frequently discussed topics of the lesson program were how the preservice teachers and the faculty member giving the lesson were affected by the pandemic conditions in the theory lessons that they carried out online over the two semesters when these practice lessons took place, what kind of challenges they faced and how they overcame them.

The many years of experience that the faculty member giving the lesson had in primary school teaching and conducting teaching practice courses with different and large numbers of students allowed her to understand the different aspects of the prospective teachers that differentiated them from the pre-pandemic preservice teachers. The idea of presenting what these preservice teachers experienced in the shadow of the pandemic through their own narratives and their desire to share their own narratives with others formed the origin of the research. To accomplish this, the study benefitted from the steps proposed by Creswell (2012) in narrative research. The starting point of the research led to defining the concept, and then the research sample was determined accordingly. Afterwards, several interviews were conducted with the preservice teachers after obtaining the necessary ethical approvals. The narratives obtained from the interviews were analysed and themed, and then the stories were examined and sorted in the dimensions determined through data analysis.The analysis results were then combined with stories to create a holistic story, and the story titled 'Being a preservice teacher in the shadow of the pandemic' was created. In the research process, we cooperated with the participants from determining the research title to identifying the report's validity.

Data Collection

Interpersonal interaction between the interviewer and the interviewee is crucial during narrative interviews . Relational, attentive, and responsive co-construction of meaning must be accomplished in the interview (Horsdal, 2012). The preservice teachers were asked in the interview forms to share their opinions on conducting teaching practice remotely, their perceptions about this educational process, their teaching practice experiences during the pandemic, the challenges they faced and how they coped with them, and how distance eductation affected their teaching competencies and their possible duties in the future, in their own words. The first version of the interview forms was submitted to the opinion of a field expert with studies on narrative research, and then the necessary amendments and edits were made. Pilot interviews were conducted with another preservice primary school teacher who was not a research participant but had completed the teaching practice course remotely just like the research participants had, and the functionality of the questions was tested. Then, the final version of the interview forms was produced.

Data Analysis

The seven approaches that Fraser (2004; cited by Ersoy & Bozkurt, 2017) proposed for narrative analysis were adopted when the data was analysed. Accordingly, during the interviews conducted with the participants, the researcher first tried to make sense of the emotional reflection of preservice teachers' experiences of distance education (1). Secondly, interview transcripts were created and shared with the participants to obtain feedback regarding the points they wanted to add, remove, and correct (2). The researcher then compiled the raw data and sorted it according to type and the dimensions of the story and interpreted it (3). Thematic analysis was applied. The experiences of the preservice primary school teachers during the pandemic were listed

chronologically, and themes, sub-themes, and codes were generated. Then, themes common to the participants and the situations experienced were revealed, and the individual, interpersonal, cultural, and structural dimensions of the experiences were examined and reviewed (4). In determining the social and political connections of the stories (5), we focused on the origins of the narratives in the stories told. Subsequently, the Analysis of Barkhuizen (2008) and the Analysis of Clandinin and Connelly (2000) were used. Benefiting from the Analysis of Barkhuizen, the most inclusive main STORY, the sub-story covered by the main STORY; and the small stories covered by the main STORY and the sub-story were created.

The main STORY (Being a preservice teacher in the shadow of the pandemic) relates to the socio-political context in which the participants live and the situations within this context. The sub-story covered by the main STORY (such as the consequences of teaching practice) refers to stories involving processes in their psychological and interpersonal relationships that the participants could not intervene in, but that also directly affected their own story. Small stories (taking part in students' world as an 'Elder Brother!') consists of personal stories that cover the emotions, thoughts, and ideas that comprise the participants' internal and social interactions (Ersoy & Bozkurt, 2017). Using the Analysis of Clandinin and Connelly, interaction reflecting personal and social context, continuity reflecting the context of the past, future, and present, place/space analysis referring to the places where these two dimensions existed were analysed in the context of situations that are evident/obvious and implicit. After these analyses were conducted, the differences between the participants were identified (6), and scientific narratives (7) for personal stories were created. The integrated story thus created was formed around the elements of the environment, characters, actions, problems, and solutions (Creswell, 2012).

Ethical Procedures

Several ethical principles were considered and implemented from the design phase to conducting this research. First of all, after determining the research subject, the researchers obtained the necessary approvals from the university's Ethics Committee for Human Research (dated 28 March 2021, No.2021-02/13). Consent forms were offered to the research participants, and then the signed consent forms were collected from the preservice teachers who wanted to participate voluntarily in the study. The participants were informed in advance that the study did not contain any conditions that would cause them any physical or psychological discomfort, and they would be free to leave the study whenever they wished; and if that happened, the information provided by the researcher would only be used with the consent of the participant. In addition, the participants were asked to provide a nickname for themselves during the study, and the researcher confirmed that no personal information would be shared with anyone. The interviews were recorded with the consent of the participants, and the nicknames provided by the participants were used in the transcripts. The interview transcripts and recordings were saved in an encrypted file on the computer, and the data analysis process began. The research carried out based on these steps was conducted considering ethical principles. In addition to these ethical principles, the aspects of ethics in the relationship, ethics in the design, and ethics in the reporting, all of which are suggested specifically for narrative studies, were considered (Josselson, 2007; cited by Ersoy & Bozkurt, 2017).

The researcher went into teaching different courses during the undergraduate education of the research participants and finally conducted the participants' I and II teaching practice courses. As a restul, a long-term and close relationship developed between the participants and the researcher. The fact that the research subject was determined together with the participants during the course proves the research's transparency. In addition, another course that the research participants took from the researcher previously is a course of research in education. On this course, the participants were able to learn about narrative research design, which is a commonly used research method. The fact that the participants had prior knowledge about the research focus, research method, and the process to be followed enabled them to conduct the research collaboratively.

In terms of ethical elements in the design, the positive and negative experiences of preservice teachers who completed their teaching practice remotely are not limited to this sample alone but also concern a wider social group. It is believed that these clinical experiences will light the way for future research on teacher education and teacher competencies in distance education. The data obtained here can also be used to improve a wider group -- including preservice teachers in different branches -- considered to represent the participants.

As for the reporting in the ethical sense, after the the story and the description of the participants were put in report form, the report was presented to the participants and their opinions were obtained. In addition, the whole report was shared with an expert in conducting studies on narrative research design and asked for his opinion.

Validity and Reliability

Considering the proposed strategies for ensuring the validity and reliability of qualitative research (Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2018), this study employed in-depth and extensive data collection, ensured data diversification by conducting a series of interviews, asked for expert and participant opinions, and used detailed and in-depth description and participant consent methods. The fact that the transcripts of the interviews conducted with the participants consisted of 42 pages and that the series of interviews carried out with each participant individually took about five months proves that the data collection was in-depth and an in-depth and extensive. Furthermore, getting participant consent for the creation of raw data and subsequently reporting these data by means of a story confirms the credibility of the research.

To ensure the reliability of the study, pilot interviews were conducted with a different preservice teacher who had the same qualities as the participants but was not included in the research participants. The data were analysed by the researcher, considering a provisional reliability value. In addition, to ensure the reliability of the analysis of the collected data, a field expert who conducts narrative studies but was not included in the study was asked to examine the research questions and themes for consistency.

RESULTS

The findings revealed four consistent dimensions in the narratives of all the participants. These are as follows: Being a preservice teacher in time of distance teacher education, the experience of distance teaching practice; professional development, the challenges faced and coping with them, the consequences of distant teaching practice, and preparating for the teaching profession. The stories of three preservice teachers nicknamed Ediz, Emel, and Hacer are presented considering these dimensions. In the following sections, the sub-stories are presented as main headings, and the individual stories specific to the participants are given as sub-headings in line with the procedure expressed in the data analysis section using the Analysis of Barkhuizen.

Being a Preservice Teacher in the Time of Distance Teacher Education

- *Teaching Based on Theoretical Foundations*

The journey to becoming a teacher lasts eight semesters…but three of them took place remotely... Ediz had to graduate without having a chance to experience real learning environments during the critical periods when theory needed to be backed up by practice in teacher education. Indeed, a large part of his teacher education period -- nearly a third of it -- had been quite challenging for Ediz. We thought that Ediz first approached distance teacher education positively, but he showed over time that he approached it with caution.

Realizing the advantages of distance education, such as no time and space limitation and supporting learner autonomy, Ediz also started to analyze the shortcomings in the teacher education process. Ediz analysed the distance teacher education shortcomings that arose from the fact that it was based only on theoretical foundations and often returned to his pre-distance education period in his narrative and emphasized that there was always a particular point missing in distance teacher education. Practice…

Teaching practice is crucial since it provides the first experiences by which preservice teachers get to know students and become familiar with their profession. Furthermore, it can be asserted that distance education does not offer a proper environment for preservice teachers to be able to communicate with students or even recognize them. As Ediz said:

“I have not even met any primary school students during my teacher education, for example. I don't know what the students think of us... Or how students communicate with each other. I didn't experience any of thise. I am graduating without having a chance to meet with students and experience a real learning environment. I'm sorry for that.”

In short, Ediz could not be involved in natural learning environments and thus could not experience the required teaching practices.

- *The time that turned into an opportunity*

Ediz's expectations of and satisfaction with distance teacher education in his narratives were positive initially, but turned negative later on. Furthermore, Emel, unlike Ediz's story, stressed that she was initially nervous about the process, but then developed a more moderate point of view on distance teacher education, and divided her narrative into two periods, namely, 'struggling and getting used to' and 'turning it into an opportunity'. During the time when she was struggling, she not only conveyed the narratives about herself, but also those about others, and noted that everyone from faculty member to student had struggled.

'At first, everyone struggled a lot. Online education was put into effect suddenly. Everyone was afraid...No one was used to distance education, that goes for faculty members and students. None of us had an idea about it at first...but then we got used to the process'.

Emel emphasized that she got used to the process after struggling for a while and positioned herself as 'adapted' in her narrative. Moreover, she managed to turn the process of distance education into an opportunity for herself. She participated in different projects conducted for preservice teachers and switched to receiving online courses (such as Coursera). She often expressed in her narrative that she explored her interests and acquired new skills during the process of distance education. However, she was aware that this improvement was due to her own efforts and that distance teacher education was insufficient to improve teacher competencies, and she did not hesitate to mention this, either. Her particular emphasis on the challenges and learning losses she experienced due to her inability to turn her theoretical knowledge into practice as she wished were the most adverse part she experienced. Just as Ediz did, Emel reiterated the problem of practice in distance teacher education in the 'small story' which was included in the main story in the study.

- *Lack of maturing in practice*

The other participant, Hacer's approach to distance teacher education, had more similar aspects to Emel than Ediz. Hacer, just like Emel, also said that she initially had difficulty adapting to the distance teacher education process, and then some opportunities (such as online lecturer courses) were offered to her, and she used these opportunities. Again, like other participants, Hacer stressed that the most critical dimension missing in distance teacher education was the practice part and therefore called herself 'raw in practice' in distance education. As Hacer said:

'We managed to be fully prepared for the profession through distance education. We could not entirely experience what the school or the students are supposed to contribute to us. So, it would not be wrong to say that was a bad experience for us... I will be a" raw" teacher in practice'.

In her narrative, Hacer implicitly stated that she and other preservice teachers experienced learning losses. In this sense, she agreed with the learning losses that Emel emphasized in her narrative. Hacer thinks that the process of distance teaching was an opportunity for students to learn how to self-regulate, but it was also a waste of time for people who did not have this skill.

The participants' narratives revealed that the main issue in distance teacher education is the 'practice problem' and stressed the inability of distance teacher education to improve teacher competencies. The specific positive aspect of the narratives was that each participant made an individual effort to ensure their development by voluntarily participating in various distance learning practices.

The Experience of Distance Teaching Practice: Professional Development, Challenges Faced, and Overcoming Them

The topic that the participants considered the most problematic in distance teacher education was the teaching practice courses, which has emerged as a leading problem in practice. The participants regarded teaching practice courses as a must-have of teacher education, and they frequently expressed in their narratives that they wished to experience them in real school environments, but could not.

- *Taking part in students' world as an 'Elder Brother!'*

Ediz's narrative revealed that he had a very challenging distance teaching experience and encountered some problems. During the interviews, he often stated that he had encountered many difficulties in the when preparing for the teaching practice and during it. Ediz believed that what lies at the core of these problems

and, perhaps, paved the way for the other problems to arise was lesson planning. That is, not knowing enough about how to make a plan... Ediz explained his precicament as follows:

'I had no theoretical or practical background in how distance education and teaching practices should be made. How can I ensure the learning outcomes remotely? Is each activity suitable for distance education? How can remote group studies be conducted? Through which activities can students participate more actively in the process? I have given this a lot of thought and realized that I am lacking in these areas. We didn't have this kind of course in our undergraduate curriculum either'.

For Ediz, who have never seen any educational content related to designing and implementing the distance teaching during his teacher education, planning the entire process also revealed the need for new skills. Although he thought that he had mastered educational technologies, he also explicitly stated that he had a hard time integrating technology into education and applying it in practice.

In my first interviews conducted with Ediz, he first attributed why he had difficulty planning the lesson to having no background in distance education. However, in later interviews, he also mentioned that he had a lack of field knowledge. He attributed some of the mistakes he made in the application process to his lack of field knowledge.

Ediz spoke at length about the consequences of lack of planning and field knowledge for teaching practice as he saw them. We sensed during our interviews that the mistakes encountered in practice made Ediz emotionally exhausted.

Ediz's narrative in the sub-story of distance teaching practice focused on his perceived professional inadequacies and described his first experience as 'painful'. He said he 'did not feel comfortable' in any of his practices, and that the practices were no good for him.

Another challenge that Ediz faced during the practices was communicating with the students. In the first interviews, he expressed his belief that he would communicate well with the students. However, in the subsequent interviews, he said that the students did not listen to him and that he could not even make himself heard. He described this as an 'utter disappointment'. Ediz attributed his disappointment to not being able to assume his teacher identity.

Ediz often stated in his narratives that he felt the lack of teacher support in assuming a teacher identity. He said he thought that the students did not consider their teacher identity right for themselves, and he attributed why to the teacher. Ediz believed that the teacher introducing Ediz as an 'Elder Brother' to his students had caused him to take part in the students' world as exactly that, an 'Elder brother' and prevented them from seeing him as a teacher. If it were me, I would know that after introducing someone to the students like this, he would not be considered a preservice teacher by students, whatever his experience in teaching was.

One of the points Ediz criticized during the interviews was the lack of teacher guidance. Ediz's small sub-story revolved around severe sefl-criticism. He repeatedly referred to his personal (communication skills, appearance, etc.) and professional inadequacies and constantly criticized himself. He said that he questioned where he was mistaken and offered an analysis of what he could not predict. He described his reactions to these analyses as 'efforts to prevent problems'. He thought that the number of mistakes he made decreased because of the measures he had taken. When I asked him to talk about the measures, he took to address the problems he predicted would be encountered, he replied,

This could be debated morally or ethically, but in order not to have any problems in the process, I turned off all of the students' microphones during my subsequent talks, so they could talk as much as I allowed. I actually did not give the students a chance to talk, especially to those who spoke a lot...This made it quite easy for me to manage the lesson, but also adversely affected the students' active participation.

In Ediz's words, he was able to make himself 'heard' by the students in this way. He preferred this as a way of assuming the identity of the teacher and having that identity acknowledged. But it seemed to me to be an authoritarian attitude as a reflection of not being acknowledged.

- *Being unable to connect with students*

It was not only Ediz whose teaching practice experience had been problematic. Emel also shared with me that she had many difficulties during distance teaching practice. She thought that the idea of distance teaching practice had more disadvantages than advantages, and she considered this process to be a new experience even for senior teachers. But she did describe the process as a situation that highlighted many problems for preservice teachers such as herself who were about to enter the profession.

Like Ediz, Emel also said that the topics she had the most difficulty with in teaching practice were lesson planning and time management. She stated in particular that she could not ascertain the interests and needs of the students because she could not establish a mutual relationship with them remotely, and this prevented her from making effective plans. She also mentioned that she could not implement or had difficulty with implementing some parts of the plans she had prepared due to technical problems (such as Internet disconnection, lack of hardware, etc.). In addition to these technical problems, she also stated that she had to deal with teacher incompetence and poorly motivated students.

Conveying the narratives of the primary school students she observed by reconditioning them, Emel said in the interviews that she observed that the primary school students could not experience the distance education process efficiently. She emphasized that the main culprit here was the teachers and she criticized the way the teachers had conducted the lesson. She referred to this as 'teacher incompetence' for teachers teach only with direct instruction and question-and-answer technique by projecting the textbook onto a screen without using teaching materials.

Emel emphasized that as a consequence of this situation she said she could 'no longer observe good examples of teaching. Emel often stated during the interviews that she felt qualified despite her teacher's incompetence and positioned herself in this process as a preservice teacher who had to deal with this situation and who was 'struggling' and 'succeeding' for her primary school students. She said that she sensed the students were more motivated in the lesson plans she had implemented, and observed that the different methods and techniques she had applied (such as augmented reality, digital narrative, and gamification) promoted the students' learning.

Believing that her verbal expression skills had improved, Emel, just like Ediz, said with surprise that she had difficulty communicating with students. This was quite surprising for her because she often repeated in all interviews that she was able to communicate well with children in the primary school age group (6-10 years old) and experienced this particularly in the private lessons that she had given. Emel attributed this communication difficulty to technical problems and the students' out-of-school living conditions. Complaining about the crowded lessons, she said that she could not 'connect with' some of the students.

Like Ediz, Emel also said that initially, she could not anticipate the problems she might during the practices, but she began to take measures to address the problems that she was likely to encounter as time went on. At this time, she believed, unlike Ediz, that she had enough field knowledge and teaching competencies. She had strong communication with other stakeholders (such as instructors, other preservice teachers, and in-service teachers), and thus the measures she had taken worked. Furthermore, using methods to make the student more active in the lesson made her practices 'successful'. Emel said during the interviews that she thought that the number of mistakes decreased as the number of practice lessons increased, and that she was waiting for approval from the instructor on this topic.

- *Inadequacy of Practices*

As a preservice teacher who grew up in Turkey, Hacer thought that the distance teaching practice lessons were 'inadequate' and 'superficial' in teacher education.

'...I think that continuing education online and going on to conduct teaching practice in this way in educational faculties where so few practices and observations take place already is a challenging and inadequate process not only for students but also for the teachers and preservice teachers who take the teaching practice course... "

Hacer often said throughout the interviews that she found the number of practices (six) she carried out in her teaching practice insufficient. Remarkably, she mostly presented a narrative based on the number of practices (for example, the situation I encountered in my 'fifth practice', after my 'second practice', etc.), and this was

the focus of her small story. This issue was quite important for Hacer, and she made an effort to increase the number of practices because she noticed that she improved as the number of practices increased. She also shared that she had experience in teaching in addition to teaching practice because she made mock lessons to increase her practical experience.

Hacer also said that during the practice courses, she encountered a number of difficulties, just as the other participants had. Like Ediz and Emel, she often said that the most challenging part was planning the lesson, and she attributed this to her lack of field knowledge. The challenging situations for her in the planning process were designing the lesson to suit the expected learning outcome, choosing the appropriate method to be used in distance education, and preparing suitable material for the subject. She also had trouble communicating with students.

Hacer also mentioned that the technical problems (Internet disconnection, getting kicked out of 'zoom', limited access to the learning service, etc.) she encountered during the teaching practice courses also had an adverse effect on the practice itseld. She said there had been times when technical problems caused her practice lessons to end prematurely and led her to have difficulty managing the lesson. Unlike other participants, Hacer implied that she was disturbed by the primary school student parents interrupting their children during the practice lessons and explained that this badly affected her motivation.

Hacer stated that she tried to get assistance from different stakeholders (instructors and teachers) about how to deal with the problems she faced. She said that she often thought about the problems she was likely to encounter and took precautions. I also asked Hacer about the measures she had taken, just as I had asked the other participants.

'..Students were required to log into the online game activity with the code that I projected onto the screen. At this stage, most students had trouble logging in and it got chaotic. It was a nightmare... there were even students crying and screaming. They had a hard time understanding the instructions I gave them. I wasted time, which I should not have, so I could not finish my activity. That was kind of a big lesson for me. My first mistake was not to say, 'Do it with me!' My second mistake was to say, 'You all log in to the app.' But instead, I should have said, 'Do not log in! Answer me with gestures so that I can see your response'. That's what I did in the next practice lesson. The students could not participate in the practice digitally; but on the other hand, there was no confusion, so no problem was experienced either...'

Like Ediz, Hacer tried to prevent the problems encountered in the practice lesson by blocking student access.

There were common points to all three participants' teaching experiences in the narratives. These were challenges in communicating with students, taking measures to address any problems that may arise, and planning the lesson. The participants' distance teaching practice was quite challenging, and they struggled to succeed at this time.

- *The Consequences of Distance Teaching Practice*

The participants have not yet started out in their profession, so we will only be able to see the consequences of their teaching practice when they teach for real in the years ahead. However, it is likely that the difficulties encountered during distance education and the efforts to overcome these challenges will stay with the participants. Indeed, I saw evidence of this in all the interviews I conducted with the participants and deduced that the participants were already aware of this matter.

- *A feeling of inadequacy and a measure of rightful pride*

Ediz, who regarded having experience in designing the lesson in distance education as a golden opportunity, felt more fortunate than in-service teachers in adapting to the changes that may take place in education in the future. Yet, he found it 'worrying' that he had no practical experience in face-to-face education. Uncertainty about whether online practices are similar to face-to-face education also worried Ediz.

The main consequence of Ediz's experience of distance teaching practice was the 'change in his perspective'. During several interviews with Ediz, he indicated that his way of looking had changed during the practice lessons, and he was well aware of this change. Distance teaching practice had also changed Ediz's way of

looking at teaching competencies. The 'feeling of inadequacy', which he emphasized almost in all the interviews, came to light gradually when I figured out the consequences of the practice.

The problems that Ediz encountered during the practice lessons made him feel inadequate and fueled his belief that he would fail in the profession. Ediz often compared himself with his peers during the interviews and retrospectively positioned himself as 'inadequate' compared with other preservice teachers. As Ediz said: '... When I look at my preservice teacher colleagues, I see that they are more controlled, more patient, and more competent... So they are better than me. I am not like them...'

During our interviews, Ediz described realizing his inadequacies and trying to cope with them as an 'utter disappointment' because he thought that the exam when they would test whether the preservice teachers who intended to practice this profession in the future were qualified enough should not be this late (final year), and he repeated several times that this situation put him in emotional limbo.

The most positive consequence of distance teaching practice for Ediz was that he realized he could use educational technologies and measurement and assessment tools effectively and accurately when teaching. He particularly noted that he considered mastering educational technologies to be a unique opportunity for distance education, and the ability to integrate technological tools into the lesson easily was an experience she could be proud of.

- *Development of Competencies*

The consequence of the distant teaching practice for Emel was similar to Ediz in terms of having experience in designing a lesson in distance education and adapting to changes in education. Although she stated that she had doubts about whether online practices were similar to face-to-face education, Emel focused on the positive aspects of distance teaching practice for her in the interviews, such as her professional development, and emphasized that she was sure of her competencies. She said: 'I am confident. This will have a positive effect on me. I am not going to suffer from inexperience. I think my competencies have improved now'.

The main focus of Emel's narrative was competency development. Concerns about whether she was ready for the teaching profession were not prevalent in her narrative. She mainly expressed her mastery of using educational technology, her field and professional knowledge competencies, and her effort to learn modern methods and techniques, and detailed them from time to time during the interviews. It seemed that these aspects were an essential part of acquiring a professional teacher identity for Emel.

Emel repeated that she believed she was a 'determined' and 'fast learner' preservice teacher when it came to distance teaching practice. She said: 'I had to succeed in my teaching practice. I decided to do this earlier and did whatever it takes to do this. I researched it, learned, and taught. I kept a cool head throughout, and I persevered'…' So she confirmed Ediz's opinion about the other preservice teachers.

- *I am so lucky to have chosen this profession!*

In the interviews, Hacer expressed fewer opinions than other participants about the consequences of the experience of distance teaching practice. Even though she stated that she had doubts about whether the practices were similar to the face-to-face education, she still had mainly positive thoughts in her story.

Hacer described herself as a 'hardworking' and 'inquisitive' preservice teacher during her distance education experience. She also expressed that she thought, just like Ediz and Emel, that the consequences of distance education experience might be valuable in terms of the probable changes expected to take place in education in the future. She called designing and implementing distance teaching a 'chance' that had been given to her. She stressed that she realized she had to 'keep herself updated', particularly during this part of her education, and accordingly, she researched and learned the current approaches that she could use in her practice lessons.

During the online education part of the course, I often searched for educational sites and online games to find out what innovations I could apply in my lessons. I tried to keep myself updated by reading the related research and articles at this time...

Although she faced several difficulties in her teaching practice, Hacer emphasized that she believed she had chosen the right profession. She said that she realized once again that she loves students. Hacer said, 'I am so lucky to have chosen this profession'.

The consequences of the teaching practice at a distance showed that all three participants believed that having experience in designing a teaching process in distance education would positively affect their future teaching lives. It was also revealed that all three participants spoke of the impact of teaching competencies, and there were positive and negative consequences in this regard. The uncertainty about the adaptability of the process of teaching practice at a distance to the face-to-face education process was because none of the participants had any face-to-face practice experience.

- *Preparation for the Teaching Profession*

Formal teacher education is essential, but how preservice teachers prepare for the profession individually is also important. During the interviews conducted with the participants, they revealed that they found formal teacher education inadequate and made efforts to improve their competencies individually when preparing themselves for the teaching profession.

- *For the sake of being a good teacher...!*

Not believing that distance teaching practices can prepare him for the teaching profession, Ediz stated that he realized he should try harder to fight the feeling of inadequacy and become a really 'good teacher'. This awareness was paramount at the last period of the distance teaching practice. He said that he first participated in distance education certificate programs conducted by different educational institutions for preservice teachers and thought he could put the knowledge and skills he acquired during this education into practice, albeit a little. He also believed that the training he had received would be reflected in his teaching skills. He said: 'There is no doubt that the additional training I received will contribute to my teaching life...' Ediz, who also started working as a contract teacher in private educational institutions to further his teaching experience, repeated that he had been researching different methods and techniques to use in practice, following educational platforms, trying to receive supervision from in-service teachers, and striving to keep 'a bit of rightful pride'.

- *A Journey of Volunteer Teaching*

Stating that the contribution made by the formal education she received to her teaching field knowledge is undeniably essential, Emel was very confident of her teaching competencies. During the interviews, she often repeated that the institution in which she was educated made her theoretically ready for the teaching profession, but that she achieved her practical development through her own efforts.

'I already considered myself qualified theoretically. I tended to research new things during the distance education part my education. I really learned in the fourth grade how to put theory into practice. How was I able to learn this? It's because I was involved in many projects. During the courses we took at TUBITAK [Science and Technology Research Counci of Turkey], we learned how to put science eductation into practice and how to prepare lesson plans. We conducted studies on how we can use augmented reality in our lessons, how to instill the spirit of enterprise in our students, how can we integrate all this into our lesson plans and implement it. I believe that these things improved me outside of school...'

Stating that she has been giving private lessons regularly (for about three years) since she started her teacher education, Emel said in our interview that her volunteer teaching journey also started with a project she joined in her undergraduate education. She added that not only had she been giving paid lessons but also free lessons for the common good. Emel expressed that the volunteer teaching experience had a special place in her heart, and she believed that this experience would illuminate the way ahead for her in preparation for the teaching profession. She said: 'I also had some concerns about whether the education I received would really prepare me for my life as a teacher. My volunteer teaching experience allowed me to see the way ahead...'

- *Seeking more teaching experience*

Two main points came to the fore in Hacer's narrative about readiness for the teaching profession -- 'Seeking to get teaching experience other than practice lessons' and 'conducting studies that promote educational development'. During our interviews with Hacer, she frequently implied that she did not feel ready for the teaching profession. Complaining about the inadequate teaching practice lessons, she said that she had contacted private educational institutions and prepared demo course recordings and shared them. She even said that some educational institutions called her for a job interview after receiving her course recordings and allowed her to practice in front of primary school students. When I asked Hacer, who said being face-to-face

with students did her good during the pandemic, why she made demo course recordings, she emphasized that she needed more teaching experience and added, 'I think it is important for me to be prepared for the profession'.

Hacer explained in detail that she had researched different methods and techniques for each demo course recording she had prepared, and discovered many sites and apps that could help her integrate the technology into her lessons. This quest to address the lack of practice expressed in Hacer's narrative's focus seemed to have helped her feel more relaxed in readiness for the profession.

In the narrative of readiness for the teaching profession, all three participants frequently referred to the small story about lack of practice. For the participants, practice was crucial in the profession, particularly filling the gap in formal education. And this was only possible through individual efforts during distance education. In my interviews with the participants, I observed that they were striving to be ready for the profession.

CONCLUSION and DISCUSSION

The unexpected and sudden transition from face-to-face education to online education because of the COVID-19 pandemic has explicitly shown how imprtant it is to be ready for any transformations that may take place in education and that affect society globally or locally. Online education offers some benefits to learners such as self-learning, time management, literacy skills development, and encouraging them to take personal responsibility in problem-solving (Watson, 2007) by promoting the development of 21st-century skills, but also requires that teacher be well prepared to adapt the lessons to distance education.

No satisfactory proposal was put forward for teacher education programs in Turkey during the COVID-19 pandemic, as experienced at many levels of education; the only thing considered was transfering the practices used in face-to-face education to online environments. Problems are bound to be encountered during this transfer unless instructional designs are made in line with the principles of distance education (Anderson & Simpson, 2012). Research results also show that preservice teachers have faced some problems in distance teacher education.

The results of this research are mainly related to clinical experience; therefore, they also have various implications for preparing teacher education in the aftermath of COVID-19. The research outcomes prove that the participating preservice teachers had both positive and negative experiences regarding distance teacher education. These experiences are also valuable for shaping the perspectives of preservice teachers with regard to distance teacher education. The particpating preservice teachers experienced the advantages of distance teacher education, such as supporting learner autonomy, helping them acquire new skills, and exploring their interests by allowing them to make use of new opportunities for individual learning by eliminating time and space constraints. Other studies exist that corroborate this study's findings (Basilaia & Kvavadze, 2020; Petrie, 2020; Valentine, 2002; Yolcu, 2020).

This study shows that the preservice teachers experienced several negative situations along with the favorable ones mentioned. For example, preservice teachers were exposed to theory-based education in the period of distance education, so they could not participate in educational processes that put theory into practice, and they particularly experienced some deficiencies in terms of practice. On weighing up the negative and positive aspects experienced by the preservice teachers, it seems that the disadvantages outweight the advantages. In this regard, our study's results contradict those of the study by Hamutoğlu, et al. (2019). These contradicting results can be interpreted as a reflection of the difference between conducting the research before and during the pandemic. Accordingly, it would not be wrong to assert that some of the problems were experienced during the distance teacher education carried out during the pandemic. In this sense, the shortcomings experienced in practice are at the core of these problems. This is why some studies emphasise that teaching practice courses are not as efficient as theoretical ones in distance teacher education (Hamutoğlu, et al., 2019; Paydar & Dogan, 2019; Yolcu, 2020).

In Turkey, preservice teachers are expected to make best use of their professional competencies by getting to know the students and the school environment through practice lessons in teacher education (Sands & Özçelik, 1997). Yet, the research results show that distance teacher education is inadequate for preservice teachers in terms of developing their teaching competencies, and they will probably have to start their profession without being able to familiarise themselves with the actual school environment and their students. Furthermore, this

research shows that the participating preservice teachers were aware of their professional inadequacies and made individual efforts to overcome them, even if they were unable to implement their practices in communication with students in real school settings. This is also promising for other stakeholders who are expected to play a role in education in the future.

The topic of whether distance learning is effective became current particularly after applied education was interrupted during the pandemic (Turkish Education Association Think-Tank [TEDMEM], 2020). Delamarter and Ewart (2020) highlighted the uncertainty about whether teacher education programs conducted during the pandemic met preservice teachers' professional competency requirements for graduation. They revealed in their study conducted with preservice teachers that preservice teachers are concerned about the uncertainty as to whether the teaching profession will undergo a fundamental transformation in the future and whether the profession they have chosen will continue to exist. Similarly, another study conducted by Varela and Desiderio (2021) found that preservice teachers have negative feelings in the face of uncertainty about how the distance teacher education they received will affect their eligibility for teacher certification in future years.

Other studies show that the uncertainties during the pandemic period have increased the tension levels of the preservice teachers and adversely affected their motivation (Fidalgo et al., 2020; Karakuş et al., 2020; Karatepe, et al., 2020; Yolcu, 2020). They have also shown that the participating preservice teachers find the uncertainties about the future of the teaching profession alarming and that the entire process of distance teacher education adversely affects their motivation and satisfaction. Similarly, several studies have shown that preservice teachers are quite dissatified with the education they received from online courses (Karakuş et al., 2020; Karatepe, et al., 2020; Mohalik & Sahoo, 2020 One of the main reasons for this dissatisfaction is the problems experienced in teacher-student communication (Duban & Şen, 2020; Paydar & Doğan, 2019; Yolcu, 2020).

There is no doubt that communication between everyone involved has always been an essential factor in teaching, and the pandemic period has made this communication even more important. The perceived psychological and communicative distance in online education (Moore, 1993) has fueled these communication problems even further. Our study's results show that preservice teachers have difficulty communicating with their peers; however, they do not include a specific outcome for the communication problems between preservice teachers and faculty members. Students want to learn together with their peers both in the formal and distance learning settings, so it is helpful to structure the lesson around a learner-centered and interactive environment (Göçer & Gülbahar, 2021). At this point, the faculty members' competencies come to the fore in presenting the educational design to their students. The technological content knowledge of the faculty members who design and carry out the lessons in distance education is an essential part of the overall process (Darabi, et al., 2006). The research results showing that the preservice teachers pointed out the inadequacies of the faculty members conducting the lesson in distance education can be considered in this vein. They show that the success of the distance teacher education process should also be examined in this sense.

Another reason why preservice teachers in Turkey have negative experiences in distance education is that they know very little about distance education practices and methods in terms of teacher education. The results of other studies confirm this outcome (Özer &Turan, 2021; Yolcu, 2020). Furthermore, the fact that preservice teachers emphasized learning losses in their professional education is one of the most remarkable findings of this study. Learning loss, which can simply be described as forgetting or having difficulty remembering previously learned knowledge, is primarily associatedwith the periods when formal education is interrupted for a long time due to school holidays, pandemics, or natural disasters, but it is actually a concept used for K-12 students based on reading and math skills (Alexander, et al., 2016; Cardinal, 2020; Dorn et al., 2020; Engzell, et al., 2021; Geven & Hasan, 2020; Harris & Larsen, 2016; Hanushek & Woessmann, 2020; Kaffenberger, 2021; Kerry & Davies, 1998; Kuhfeld & Tarasawa, 2020; Kuhfeld et al., 2020; Sabates, et al., 2021). Considering that the whole curriculum cannot be implemented using online learning tools during pandemics (TEDMEM, 2020), learning losses are bound to occur and this is one of the problems encountered in education (Saavedra, 2020). It is also worth noting here that the preservice teachers who emphasized learning loss used this concept, especially for maths lessons. Examining the issue independently of age and education level, it should also be considered that preservice teachers might also have experienced learning losses during the pandemic, and this should be regarded as a subject that requires in-depth research.

The COVID-19 pandemic has led to dramatic changes in teaching practices, which are undoubtedly the most critical components of teacher education. It is essential to show the experiences obtained in teaching practices, a process in which preservice teachers gain the necessary practical experience before starting the profession, are influenced in various ways. This being so, the results obtained in this study regarding distance teaching practice not only critically portray the practices that took place but they also shed light on what the future has in store for the the teaching profession and the transformation that teacher education will undergo in the years ahead.

This study shows that preservice teachers' distance teaching practices are challenging and they encounter many problems at this time. This research also concludes that preservice teachers who do not have sufficient knowledge and experience in planning, implementing, and assessing lessons in distance education face many difficulties before and during the practice lessonsThe preservice teachers experienced difficulties particularly during the lesson-planning phase, such as content selection, adapting the selected content to distance education, selecting appropriate methods and techniques, being able to integrate educational technologies into the lesson and put them into practice; and during the lesson itself such as time management, classroom management, and communication with students.The research results here indicate that preservice teachers have difficulty in communicating with students, identifying their needs by establishing bonds, and getting to know students, and that they face difficulties in effective lesson-planning.

The reasons why preservice teachers experience difficulties in these areas are their lack of Pedagogical Field Knowledge (PFK), as well as the lack of infrastructure for distance education. Some studies have found that preservice teachers experience some problems in teaching practice due to the lack of PFK (Gündoğdu et al., 2018; Koç & Yıldız, 2012; Taşdere, 2014). Pedagogical Content Knowledge (PCK) is PFK transformed of into teaching knowledge (Shulman, 1987), and the practice lessons affect this transformation (Shulman, 1986).Preservice teachers with inaccurate and inadequate PFK may pass on their own misconceptions to their students during the practice lessons (Hashweh, 1987). Therefore, preservice teachers' PFK competencies should be tested with small practice lessons and observations during their initial learning and experiences, instead of testing them in a process aimed at hands-on practice such as teaching practice, which coincides with the final stages of their learning. In this respect, this research reveals some critical outcomes since the participating preservice teachers were directly involved in the teaching process without being able to test their PFK competencies beforehand. This study showed that preservice teachers experienced emotional distress as a result of the adverse impact on their practice lessons caused by PFK misconceptions. How this affects primary school students is still a controversial issue. This study therefore recommends that the teaching practice parts of teacher education be meticulously designed.

The research results prove that preservice teachers also experience technical problems caused by the lack of infrastructure for distance education quite apart from the lack of PFK. In addition to bandwidth problems due to the capacity (or lack of) of the system's infrastructure, there were interruptions that upset coordination. Another problem encountered was the fact that digital media designed for use in the practice lessons cannot be used effectively in online platforms for reasons such as size and resolution. Other studies corroborate these problems that preservice teachers encounter in distance education (Özkaral & Bozyiğit, 2020; Özüdoğru, 2021). Considering that distance educationis supposed to be carried out in an institutional context as a whole, it is clear that the problems experienced in this sense are not caused only by the preservice teachers or the technical infrastructure.

Although the ultimate goal of educational institutions conducting teaching programs is to ensure that preservice teachers have the best possible preservice teaching experience under these unprecedented educational conditions, this study concludes that they have not been able to solve some of the problems encountered and those preservice teachers had to seek alternative solutions on their own. Preservice teachers were seen to have started using different methods and techniques in their practice lessons. Although the measures taken by the preservice teachers to address the problems they faced during their practice lessons are considered favorable, some of the measures taken may not be functional or in the best interests of the student, and this study's results show that the measures taken by the preservice teachers to overcome the problems they ran into are controversial.

Another finding of this study is that preservice teachers have difficulty receiving teacher support in distance teaching practice. Other studies show that the lack of communication between everyone involved in teaching practice (preservice teacher, school administration, teacher, instructor, etc.) is a common problem (Koç & Yıldız, 2012; Taşdere, 2014). When preservice teachers can work with a good model teacher and communicate with each other effectively in the process, this is invaluable (Beck & Kosnik, 2000; Podsen & Denmark, 2013). Another essential factor in guiding preservice teachers in the right direction and allowing them to assume a professional identity in teaching practice is for instructors to avoid demoralising or inadequate counseling. Our study shows that preservice teachers experienced difficulty in acquiring their teaching identity due to the lack of adequate teacher support during the pandemic. Other studies report findings consistent with this outcome (Delamarter & Ewart, 2020; Eti & Karaduman, 2020; Judd et al., 2020; Valera & Desiderio, 2021). Piccolo, et al. (2020) note that the role of preservice primary school teachers in the lesson during distance teaching practice during the pandemic has devolved into the role of assistant teacher or teaching assistant. There is a need for supporting and informative studies into how the mentor teaching process should be conducted in exceptional conditions for teachers who have a practice teacher certificate, especially considering that preservice teachers have been forced during the pandemic to graduate without having any physical school experience.

This study shows the when a limited period of time is allocated to preservice teachers' teaching experiences with a limited number of practice lessons, combined with inadequate teacher support, this harms the development of their teaching competencies. To be more precise, preservice teachers believe that distance teaching practices are not good enough to prepare them for the teaching profession, which is why the volunteer to take part in other lessons to add to their practical experience.. Some studies report findings that parallel the findings in our study that the practice lessons lack quality quantity, regardless of the semester in which it took place (Arkün Kocadere & Aşkar, 2013; Büyükgöze Kavas & Bugay, 2009; Yolcu, 2020). Varela & Deciderio (2021) emphasize that preservice teachers' limited teaching experience coupled with superficial and inconsistent online experience may adversely affect their professional readiness. The do state, however, that there are significant differences between preservice teachers' pre-pandemic and post-pandemic practical and educational experiences.

It is known that the practice dimension of formal teacher education programs in Turkey before the pandemic took the form of face-to-face instruction. Uncertainties exist, however, about the extent to which online distance learning as an alternative in teacher education may affect the standards and objectives of teacher education in the years ahead. Another uncertainty here is that the long-term consequences of the problems faced by everyone involved in distance teaching practice are currently unknown.

There is no doubt that we will see the long-term consequences of distance teaching practices for preservice teachers in the future. But we can argue that this study has already revealed some concrete consequences for preservice teachers both positive and negative. One negative consequence is that distance teaching practices cause preservice teachers' feelings of inadequacy to come to the fore. This feeling of inadequacy galvanizes the belief of failing in the profession, which in turn makes the entire process emotionally exhausting for the preservice teachers. Furthermore, the fact that the participants could not explicitly experience the similarities and differences between distance and face-to-face teaching practice lessons only increases this concern. In other words, the challenges encountered in distance teaching practices have led some preservice teachers to change how they view the teaching profession and its components for the worse.

Distance teaching practices promote the development of preservice teachers' technology competencies. They employ current methods and techniques in practice and provide experience of teaching in online environments. These are seen as positive consequences for the participants and show that improving and supporting these competencies are an integral part of the teacher acquiring his/her professional identity.

This study also concludes that preservice teachers try to ready themselves informally for the teaching profession in addition to formal teacher education. Preservice teachers find distance teaching practice to be inadequate causing them to struggle to improve their competencies. In this context, it would not be wrong to state that in distance education, central to which is becoming a self-regulating learner, it is worth examining the efforts made by the research participants individually to prepare themselves. The research participants took part in the educational certificate programs conducted by educational institutions aiming to prepare

preservice teachers for the teaching profession. They studied in different fields, became volunteer teachers, and gave private lesson to boost their teaching experience. They practised lessons in private educational institutions other than the institutions where their teaching practices were carried out and made demo course recordings. They followed the educational platforms by exploring modern methods and techniques and tried to receive supervision from in-service teachers. The researchers conclude that preservice teachers focus mainly on improving the part of the practice part where they feel inadequate. The following suggestions can be made considering the study's findings: The positive and negative aspects experienced by the preservice teachers should be considered in the distance teacher education programs planned to be held in the future. Preservice teachers should be encouraged to develop the expectations and competencies required for the teaching profession, paying attention to their needs. Which teaching practices in distance teacher education are successful should be identified, and education programs should be revised accordingly. The necessary studies should be carried out to support the teaching competencies of preservice teachers who completed their teaching practice entirely though distance education, and they should be allowed to gain practical experience in physical learning environments before starting their profession. Preservice teachers and faculty members who are to take part in distance teaching practice should be offered educational opportunities that fill the gaps in their knowledge about how the process is designed and conducted. Longitudinal studies are needed to better understand the potential long-term consequences of distance teacher education.

Declarations

Conflict of Interest

No potential conflicts of interest were disclosed by the author with respect to the research, authorship, or publication of this article.

Ethics Approval

The formal ethics approval was granted by the Ethics Committee for Human Research of TED University.

Funding

No specific grant was given to this research by funding organizations in the public, commercial, or not-for-profit sectors.

Research and Publication Ethics Statement

The study was approved by the research team's university ethics committee of the TED University (Approval Number/ID: 2021-02/13). Hereby, we as the author consciously assure that for the manuscript the following is fulfilled:

- This material is the authors' own original work, which has not been previously published elsewhere.
- The paper reflects the authors' own research and analysis in a truthful and complete manner.
- The results are appropriately placed in the context of prior and existing research.
- All sources used are properly disclosed.

Contribution Rates of Authors to the Article

The work has a single author.

REFERENCES

Alexander, K., Pitcock, S., & Boulay, M. C. (2016). *The summer slide: What we know and can do about summer learning loss.* Teachers College Press.

Anderson, B., & Simpson, M. (2012). History and heritage in open, flexible and distance education. *Journal of Open Flexible and Distance Learning, 16*(2), 1-10.

Arkün Kocadere, S., & Aşkar, P. (2013). A review of views about student teaching courses and an application model proposal. [Okul uygulamaları derslerine ilişkin görüşlerin incelenmesi ve bir uygulama modeli önerisi]. *Hacettepe Üniversitesi Eğitim Fakültesi Dergisi, 28*(2), 27-43. http://www.efdergi.hacettepe.edu.tr/yonetim/icerik/makaleler/165-published.pdf

Barkhuizen, G. (2008). A narrative approach to exploring context in language teaching. *ELT Journal, 62*(3), 231–239. https://doi.org/10.1093/elt/ccm043

Basilaia, G., & Kvavadze, D. (2020). Transition to online education in schools during a SARS-CoV-2 Coronavirus (COVID-19) Pandemic in Georgia. *Pedagogical Research, 5*(4), 1-9. https://doi.org/10.29333/pr/7937

Beck, C., & Kosnik, C. (2000). Associate teachers in pre-service education: Clarifying and enhancing role. *Journal of Education for Teaching, 26*(3), 207- 224. https://doi.org/10.1080/713676888

Büyükgöze Kavas, A., & Bugay, A. (2009). Perceptions of prospective teachers about deficiencies of pre-service teacher education and suggestions. [Öğretmen adaylarının hizmet öncesi eğitimlerinde gördükleri eksiklikler ve çözüm önerileri]. *Pamukkale Üniversitesi Eğitim Fakültesi Dergisi, 25*(1), 13-21. https://dergipark.org.tr/tr/pub/pauefd/issue/11118/132968

Caires, S., Almeida, L., & Vieira, D. (2012). Becoming a teacher: Student teachers' experiences and perceptions about teaching practice. *European Journal of Teacher Education, 35*(2), 163-178. https://doi.org/10.1080/02619768.2011.643395

Cardinal, J. (2020). *Lost learning: What does the research really say?* International Baccalaureate Organization.

Carrillo, C., & Flores, M. A. (2020). COVID-19 and teacher education: A literature review of online teaching and learning practices. *European Journal of Teacher Education, 43*(4), 466-487. https://doi.org/10.1080/02619768.2020.1821184

Clandinin, D. J., & Connelly, F. M. (2000). *Narrative inquiry: Experience and story in qualitative research*. Jossey-Bas.

Craig, C. J. (2011). Narrative inquiry in teaching and teacher education. In J. Kitchen, D. Ciuffetelli Parker & D. Pushor (Eds.), *Narrative inquiries into curriculum making in teacher education* (pp.19-42). Emerald Group Publishing Limited.

Cresswell, J. (2012). *Educational research*. Pearson Education Inc.

Dang, T. K. A. (2013). Identity in activity: Examining teacher professional identity formation in the paired-placement of student teachers. *Teaching and Teacher Education, 30*, 47-59. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tate.2012.10.006

Darabi, A. A., Sikorski, E. G., & Harvey, R. B. (2006). Validated competencies for distance teaching. *Distance Education, 27*(1), 105-122. https://doi.org/10.1080/01587910600654809

Davidson, N., & Major, C. H. (2014). Boundary crossings: Cooperative learning, collaborative learning, and problem-based learning. *Journal on Excellence in College Teaching, 25*(3–4), 7-55.

Delamarter, J., & Ewart, M. (2020) Responding to student teachers' fears: How we're adjusting during the COVID-19 shutdowns. *Northwest Journal of Teacher Education, 15*(1), 1-10. https://doi.org/10.15760/nwjte.2020.15.1.3

Delfino, M., & Persico, D. (2007). Online of face-to-face? Experimenting with different techniques in teacher training. *Journal of Computer Assisted Learning, 23*(5), 351-365. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1365-2729.2007.00220

Donitsa-Schmidt, S., & Ramot, R. (2020). Opportunities and challenges: Teacher education in Israel in the Covid-19 pandemic. *Journal of Education for Teaching, 46*(4), 586-595. https://doi.org/10.1080/02607476.2020.1799708

Dorn, E., Hancock, B., Sarakatsannis, J., & Viruleg, E. (2020). *COVID-19 and student learning in the United States: The hurt could last a lifetime.* McKinsey & Company.

Duban, N., & Şen, F. G. (2020). Classroom teacher candidates' views on distance education of primary school students in the Covid19 pandemic process.[Sınıf öğretmeni adaylarının Covid-19 pandemi sürecine ilişkin görüşleri]. *Turkish Studies, 15*(4), 357-376. https://doi.org/10.7827/TurkishStudies.43653

Duncan, H. E., & Barnett, J. (2007). Learning to teach online: What works for pre-service teachers. *Journal of Educational Computing Research, 40*(3), 357-376. https://doi.org/10.2190/EC.40.3.f

Engzell, P., Frey, A., & Verhagen, M. (2021). Learning loss due to school closures during the COVID-19 pandemic. *PNAS, 118*(17), 1-7. https://doi.org/10.1073/pnas.202237611

Ersoy, A., & Bozkurt, M. (2017). *Anlatı araştırması*. In A. Saban & A. Ersoy (Eds.), Eğitimde nitel araştırma desenleri (pp. 237-277). Anı Publishing.

Eti, İ., & Karaduman, B. (2020). Investigation of covid-19 pandemic process in terms of professional competences of teacher candidates. [Covid-19 pandemisi sürecinin öğretmen adaylarının mesleki

yeterlikleri açısından incelenmesi]. *Milli Eğitim, 49*(1), 635-656. https://doi.org/10.37669/milliegitim.787238

Fidalgo, P., Thormann, J., Kulyk, O., & Lencastre, J. A. (2020). Students' perceptions on distance education: a multinational study. *International Journal of Educational Technology in Higher Education, 17*(18). https://doi.org/10.1186/s41239-020-00194-2

Geven, K., & Hasan, A. (2020). *Learning losses in Pakistan due to Covid-19 school closures: A technical note on simulation results*. World Bank.

Göçer, A., & Gülbahar, Y. (2021). Eğitimde değişim ve dönüşüm. In A. Göçer (Eds.), *Türkçenin uzaktan öğretimi ve öğrenimi* (pp. 6-22). Pegem Publications.

Görgülü-Arı, A., & Hayır-Kanat. M. (2020). Prospective teacher's views on Covid-19 (Coronavirus) [Covid-19 (Koronavirüs) üzerine öğretmen adaylarının görüşleri].*Van Yüzüncü Yıl Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü Dergisi*, *Salgın Hastalıklar Özel Sayısı*, 459-492.

Hamutoğlu, N. B., Sezen Gültekin, G., & Savaşçı, M. (2019). The views of teacher candidates toward distance education: Open education practices.[Öğretmen adaylarının uzaktan eğitime yönelik görüşleri: Açıköğretim uygulamaları]. *Yükseköğretim Dergisi, 9*(1), 19–28. https://doi.org/10.2399/yod.18.023

Hanushek, E., & Woessmann, L. (2020, September 11). *The economic impacts of learning losses.* https://www.oecd-ilibrary.org/education/the-economic-impacts-of-learning-losses_21908d74-en

Harris, D., & Larsen, M. (2016). *The effects of the New Orleans post-Katrina market-based school reforms on medium-term student outcomes*. Education Research Alliance for New Orleans.

Hashweh, M. Z. (1987). Effects of subject matter knowledge in the teaching of biology and physics. *Teaching &Teacher Education, 3*(2), 109-120.

Horsdal, M. (2012). *Telling lives exploring dimensions of narratives*. Routledge.

Huber, S. G., & Helm, C. (2020). COVID-19 and schooling: Evaluation, assessment and accountability in times of crises-reacting quickly to explore key issues for policy, practice and research with the school Barometer. *Educational Assessment, Evaluation and Accountability, 32*, 237–270. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11092-020-09322-y

Judd, J., Rember, B. A., Pellegrini, T., Ludlow, B., & Meisner, J. (2020). *This is not teaching: The effects of COVID-19 on teachers.* Social Publisher Foundation.

Kaffenberger, M. (2021). Modeling the long-run learning impact of the COVID-19 learning shock: Actions to (more than) mitigate loss. *RISE Insight Series*, 1-12.

Karakuş, N., Ucuzsatar, N., Karacaoğlu, M. Ö., Esendemir, N., & Bayraktar, D. (2020). Turkish teacher candidates' views on distance education. *RumeliDE Journal of Language and Literature Studies, 19*, 220-241. https://doi.org/10.29000/rumelide.752297

Karatepe, F., Küçükgençay, N., & Peker, B. (2020). What are the perspectives of teacher candidates on synchronous distance education? A survey study. [Öğretmen adayları senkron uzaktan eğitime nasıl bakıyor? Bir anket çalışması]. *Journal of Social and Humanities Sciences Research, 7*(53), 1262-1274. https://doi.org/10.26450/jshsr.1868

Kaya, Z. (2002). *Uzaktan eğitim*. Pegem Publications.

Kerry, T., & Davies, B. (1998). Summer learning loss: The evidence and a possible solution. *Support for Learning, 13*(3), 118–122.

Kim, J. (2020). Learning and teaching online during Covid-19: Experiences of student teachers in an early childhood education practicum. *International Journal of Early Childhood, 52*, 145-158. https://doi.org/10.1007/s13158-020-00272-6

Koç, C., & Yıldız, C. (2012). The reflectors of teaching experiences: Diaries.[Öğretmenlik uygulamasının yansıtıcıları: Günlükler]. *Eğitim ve Bilim, 37*(164), 223-236.

Kuhfeld M., & Tarasawa, B. (2020). The COVID-19 slide: What summer learning loss can tell us about the potential impact of school closures on student academic achievement. *NWEA Research*, 1-7.

Kuhfeld, M., Soland, J., Tarasawa, B., Johnson, A., Ruzek, E., & Liu, J. (2020). Projecting the potential impact of COVID-19 school closures on academic achievement. *Educational Researcher, 49*(8), 549–565. https://doi.org/10.3102/0013189X20965918

Lei, M., & Medwell, J. (2021). Impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on student teachers: How the shift to online collaborative learning affects student teachers' learning and future teaching in a Chinese context. *Asia Pacific Education Review, 22*, 169-179. https://doi.org/10.1007/s12564-021-09686-w

Margaliot, A., Gorev, D., & Vaisman, T. (2018). How student teachers describe the online collaborative learning experience and evaluate its contribution to their learning and their future work as teachers. *Journal of Digital Learning in Teacher Education, 34*(2), 88–102. https://doi.org/10.1080/21532974.2017.1416710

Merrill, B., & West, L. (2009). *Using biographical methods in social research*. SAGE Publishing.

Mohalik, R., & Sahoo, S. (2020). E-readiness and perception of student teachers' towards online learning in the midst of COVID-19 pandemic. *SSRN Electronic Journal.* http://doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.3666914

Moore, M. G. (1993). Moore, M. G. (1993). Theory of transactional distance. In D. Keegan (Eds.), *Theoretical principles of distance education* (pp. 22-29). Routledge.

Moore, M. G., & Kearsley, G. (2004). *Distance education: A systems view of online learning*. Wadsworth.

Murphy, M. P. A. (2020). COVID-19 and emergency e-learning: Consequences of the securitization of higher education for post-pandemic pedagogy. *Contemporary Security Policy, 41*(3), 492–505. https://doi.org/10.1080/13523260.2020.1761749

Özer, S., & Turan, E. Z. (2021). The opinions of the teacher candidates on distance learning practices in the Covid-19 pandemic process.[Öğretmen adaylarının Covid-19 nedeniyle sunulan uzaktan eğitime ilişkin görüşleri]. *Turkish Studies - Education, 16*(2), 1049-1068. https://doi.org/10.47423/TurkishStudies.48147

Özkaral, T. C., & Bozyiğit R. (2020). Social studies and geography teacher candidates' views on Coronavirus (COVID 19) and online education process. *Review of International Geographical Education, 10*(3), 467-484. https://doi.org/10.33403/rigeo.756757

Özüdoğru, G. (2021). Problems faced in distance education during Covid-19 Pandemic. *Participatory Educational Research, 8*(4), 321-333. https://doi.org/10.17275/per.21.92.8.4

Paydar, S., & Doğan, A. (2019). Teacher candidates' views on open and distance learning environments. [Öğretmen adaylarının açık ve uzaktan öğrenme ortamlarına yönelik görüşleri]. *Eğitim ve Teknoloji, 1*(2), 154-162. https://dergipark.org.tr/tr/pub/egitek/issue/50136/650237

Petrie, C. (2020). *Spotlight: Quality education for all during COVID-19 crisis*. United Nations.

Piccolo, D., Tishulmanpton, S., & Livers, S. D. (2020). Transitioning to online student teaching: factors impacting elementary education student teachers. In R. E. Ferding, E. Baumgartner, R. Hartshorne, R. Kaplan-Rakowski & C. Mouza (Eds.), *Teaching, technology, and teacher education during the COVID-19 pandemic: stories from the field* (pp. 297-301). Association for the Advancement of Computing in Education (AACE).

Podsen, I. J., & Denmark, V. (2013). *Coaching and mentoring first year and student teachers*. Routledge.

Reeves, T. D. (2017). Pre-service teachers' data use opportunities during student teaching. *Teaching and Teacher Education, 63*, 263-273.

Saavedra, J. (2020). *Educational challenges and opportunities of the coronavirus (COVID- 19) pandemic*. World Bank.

Sabates, R., Carter, E., & Stern, J. M. B. (2021). Using educational transitions to estimate learning loss due to COVID-19 school closures: The case of complementary basic education in Ghana. *International Journal of Educational Development, 82*, 1-9. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijedudev.2021.102377

Sands, M., & Özçelik, D.A. (1997). *Okullarda uygulama çalışmaları: Ortaöğretim*. Ajans-Türk Basımevi.

Shulman, L. S. (1986). Those who understand: Knowledge growth in teaching. *Educational Researcher, 15*(2), 4-14.

Shulman, L. S. (1987). Knowledge and teaching: Foundations of the new reform. *Harvard Educational Review, 57*(1), 1-22.

Taşdere, A. (2014). Classroom teacher candidates' problems regarding teaching practicum class and proposed solutions. [Sınıf öğretmen adaylarının öğretmenlik uygulaması dersine yönelik yaşadıkları sorunlar ve çözüm önerileri]. *Turkish Studies, 9*(2), 1477-1497. http://dx.doi.org/10.7827/TurkishStudies.6254

Türk Eğitim Derneği. (2020). *COVID-19 sürecinde eğitim: Uzaktan öğrenme, sorunlar ve çözüm önerileri* (TEDMEM Analiz Dizisi 7). Türk Eğitim Derneği Yayınları.

Valentine, D. (2002). Distance learning: Promises, problems, and possibilities. *Online Journal of Distance Learning Administration, 5*(3), 1–11.

Varela, D. G., & Desiderio, M. F. (2021). Perceptions of COVID-19 pandemic impact on the student teaching experience. *Research in Higher Education Journal, 39*,1-12.

Varela, D. G., Kupczynski, L., & Mundy, M. A. (2019). A multidimensional analysis of teacher preparation in Texas. *Research Journal of Education, 5*(6), 106-113.

Watson, J. (2007). *A national primer on K–12 online learning*. North American Council for Online Learning.

World Health Organization. (2020, March 11). *WHO Director-General's opening remarks at the media briefing on COVID-19*. https://www.who.int/dg/speeches/detail/who-director-general-s-opening-remarks-at-the-media-briefing-on-covid-19---11-march-2020

Yıldırım, A., & Şimsek, H. (2018). *Sosyal bilimlerde nitel araştırma yöntemleri*. Seçkin Publication.

Yolcu, H. H. (2020). Preservice elementary teachers' distance education experiences at the time of coronavirus (covid-19) pandemic. [Koronavirüs (covid-19) pandemi sürecinde sınıf öğretmeni adaylarının uzaktan eğitim deneyimleri]. *Açıköğretim Uygulamaları ve Araştırmaları Dergisi, 6*(4), 237-250.

Yükseköğretim Kurulu. (2018). *Öğretmen yetiştirme lisans programları*. https://www.yok.gov.tr/kurumsal/idari-birimler/egitim-ogretim-dairesi/yeni-ogretmen-yetistirme-lisans-programlari