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The investigation of attitude and readiness of information and communication technologies pre-service teachers toward web based learning

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Abstract

The present study aims to investigate attitudes and readiness of Information and Communication Technologies pre-service teachers toward web-based learning. In the study group of the research are 165 pre-service teachers. The study was conducted in the survey model. As data collection tools, 'Web-based Teaching Attitude Scale' and 'Readiness and Expectation Scale for e-Learning Process' were utilized. In analysis of the collected data, descriptive statistics, t-test, and ANOVA analysis were conducted. As a result of the research, it was found that attitude levels of pre-service teachers were lower than median; and their readiness levels were above the median. Moreover, in terms of gender, there was no significant difference between attitude and readiness scores. While there was no significant difference among attitude scores in terms of number of years in education, there was significant difference in readiness scores.

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1. Introduction

In the current information age, fast-paced developments experienced in the information and communication technologies have reflected on education area like all areas of life. Along with the technological innovations, countries have started to rearrange their education programs and policies (Çetin and Günay, 2011). In this scope, the internet, one of the significant technology advancements, has started to be used a resource with priority to fulfill education need and life-long learning demand. Internet environment enabled educational institutions to transfer their activities onto the web environment independent from spatial and temporal conditions due to the advantages of the internet (Demir, Kaymak and Horzum, 2013). At this point, one of the new learning – teaching models developed recently by educators was web-based teaching model (Çetin and Günay, 2010). Web-based teaching was defined as a learning environment in which the educational content is presented through a web browser (Karataş, 2008).

Through web-based teaching, learners are enabled to have access information from anywhere and on anytime by means of computer and internet technologies (Yiğit, Yıldırım and Özden, 2000). Besides the internet-based education applications, web-based teaching has also enabled developing interaction and communication, creating discussion platforms, and taking advantages of chat programs (Cömert, 2012). Moreover, it is possible to fulfill learners' personal learning needs and to develop their motivation by means of web-based teaching (Yeniad, 2011). Visual structure, communication and interaction capabilities and personal education opportunity can be considered as advantages of the web-based education (Alessi, & Trollip, 2001, referenced by Arkün, Baş, Avcı, Çevik and Gürcan, 2009). Additionally, web-based teaching have advantages without spatial and temporal dependency such as ability to work with materials enriched with audio and video animation, self-learning, self-regulation, and time management (Tüysüz and Aydın, 2007). Moreover, Cook (2007) enumerated the advantages of the web-based teaching as reusability of resources and materials, flexible scheduling, updateability of resources, personalized teaching, new teaching methods, evaluation and documentation. In addition to its advantages, web-based teaching exhibits several disadvantages as well. Some of these disadvantages are social isolation, cost, technical problems, and weak educational design (Cook, 2007).

Although there are numbers of advantages, online learning is required to have readiness characteristic so that students can utilize from these advantages similar to ones in the web-based learning environment (Yurdugül and Alsancak Sırakaya, 2013). In these environments, it is important for students to have readiness in terms of technical skills, motivation, and access to technology in the context of the efficiency and productivity of the process. In web-based systems, interests, expectations and required competencies of students may differ according to the conventional education (Frith and Kee, 2003). Hence, it was stated that readiness in distance learning, web-based learning, blended learning and online learning is a factor that must be taken into consideration (Usal and Bayrak, 2005; Tezer and Biçen, 2008; Demir Kaymak and Horzum, 2013).

When it is considered in terms of web-based education environments, besides the readiness, attitude is another variable that must be considered. It is important taking sensual characteristics such as attitude into consideration to create learning experience (Küçükahmet, 1997). As it is same with the conventional education environments, success of the web-based education environments depends on attitude of students toward web-based teaching (Erdoğan, Bayram and Deniz, 2007); and it largely affects learning process (Alomyan & Au, 2004). Along with the changing student roles, it is important for students to develop positive attitude toward this environment and to embrace them as part of their learning culture (Erdoğan, Bayram and Deniz, 2007). In the literature, students' attitude toward web-based teaching has been focused and its significance has been emphasized through researches (Kurubacak, 2000; Manzares, 2004; Özgür, 2011; Uzun, Özden and Yıldırım, 2013).

Application of web-based learning environments in education and number of studies in this subject has been increased significantly. Essential reason behind the expansion of web-aided education is their contribution to the learning-teaching environments (Yağcı, 2012). While effects of the web-based learning environments are being investigated, characteristics of environments and learners are required to be considered for successful results. In the web-based teaching environments, learners' characteristics are the factors to be considered. Readiness, attitude, gender, learners' grades are some of the factors to be considered. In terms of effectiveness and productivity of the process, it is important for learners to have positive attitude and to be at certain readiness level.

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