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Computer anxiety of teacher trainees in the framework of personality variables

Esra Ceyhan

Department of Counseling and Guidance in Education, College of Education, Anadolu University, 26470 Eskisehir, Turkey

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Abstract

This research aims at examining computer anxiety of teacher trainees in the framework of personality variables of irrational beliefs, learned resourcefulness, optimism/pessimism and self-disclosure. The research was carried out by 690 teacher trainees. Data were collected through Computer Anxiety Scale, Irrational Belief Scale, Learned Resourcefulness Scale and Information Form. Data analysis was carried out by ANOVA and *t* test – for the comparison of independent groups. The findings of the study revealed that the computer anxiety is related to irrational beliefs, optimism/pessimism and self – disclosure whereas no relation is found out in terms of learned resourcefulness.
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Keywords: Teacher trainees; Computer anxiety; Personality variables

1. Introduction

Contributions of computer technology are quite important in improving the quality of human life. Therefore, computer usage by human beings throughout their lives becomes very important. However, while some individuals because of their negative attitudes towards computers refrain from using computers and away from milieu in

E-mail address: eceyhan@anadolu.edu.tr.

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which computers are used, some individuals can not do without computers on the other. When the source of individual differences related to computer usage behavior is investigated, computer anxiety, as a specific feeling, has been observed as a significant factor.

There is no agreement shared by all the researchers in the literature on the definition of computer anxiety. Nevertheless, Chua, Chen, and Wong (1999) carried out a meta-analysis study including various published research between the years of 1990 and 1996. According to the result of this study, Chua, Chen and Wong explained that computer anxiety can be defined commonly as "a fear of computers while using a computer or when there's a possibility of using it". Lots of researches were carried out to grasp the nature of this anxiety during a usage of computer or when there is a possibility of using it. In literature, it was revealed that there is a significant relationship between computer anxiety and some variables. These are; gender, age, undergraduate programs (Bradley & Russell, 1997; Chua et al., 1999; Dyck & Smither, 1994; Hemby, 1998; King, Bond, & Blandford, 2002; Liu & Reed, 1992; Namlu & Ceyhan, 2002; Roop, 1999), the age of starting to use computer, the frequency of computer usage, having or not having a computer and whether attending courses/lessons related with computer, (Hakkinen, 1994; Namlu & Ceyhan, 2002; Necessary & Parish, 1996; Roop, 1999; Russell & Bradley, 1996; Selwyn, 1997); and personality types (McPherson, 1998; Paul, 1994). The findings of these researches have showed that computer anxiety is related basically with individuals' demographic characteristics, computers experiences and various personality variables. Unfortunately, researches covering the relationship between computer anxiety and personality variable have been limited. Similarly, Maurer (1994) also expressed that literature on the issue was limited and proposed that the relationship between computer anxiety and various personality variables should be investigated.

When the research examining the computer anxiety in terms of personality characteristics were reviewed, it was seen that findings of some research pointed out a significant relationship between personality characteristics and computer anxiety; though, some of them obtained no significant relationship. In the study of Bellando and Winer (1985, as cited in McPherson, 1998), it was found out that computer anxiety is not independent of various personality variables. Similarly, Morrow, Prell and McElroy (1986, as cited in Paul, 1994) mentioned that the relationship between the rigidity as a personality characteristic and computer anxiety is significant. The findings of research carried out by Abler and Sedlacek (2002) by means of taking Holland types into consideration revealed that enterprising types have more computer anxiety than realistic and investigative ones; and artistic types than realistic ones. In another research done by Anthony, Clarke, and Anderson (2000) by means of using Neo/Five Factor Inventory, a positive correlation between technophobia and neuroticism, and inverse correlation with openness were discovered. Namlu and Ceyhan (2002) also obtained the result that individual perceiving themselves as introvert have higher level of computer anxiety than individuals perceiving themselves as extrovert.

In the study of Rohner and Simonsen (1981, as cited in McPherson, 1998), no relationship between personality variables and computer anxiety have been found.

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