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Turkish Teacher Candidates' Attitudes towards Distance Turkish Teaching in Terms of Some Variables

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this research is to investigate the attitudes of Turkish teacher candidates towards distance Turkish teaching in terms of gender, owning a personal computer, previous experience of taking distance education lessons before the COVID-19 pandemic, and daily internet usage. The relational survey model was used. The study group consisted of 133 Turkish teacher candidates (77 women and 56 men) studying at Department of Turkish Education, Dede Korkut Education Faculty, Kafkas University 2021-2022 Spring Semester. Research data was collected through Google Docs. Independent samples t-test and One-Way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) were used to analyze the data. As a result of the research, it was found that the attitudes of Turkish teacher candidates towards distance Turkish teaching did not differ significantly in terms of gender, but it was found that there was a difference in favor of women in the technology dimension. While there was no significant difference between the attitudes of the teacher candidates who owned a PC and those who did not. It was also found that there was an important difference in the optimism dimension. It was found that there was no significant difference in terms of whether or not they took distance education lessons before the COVID-19 pandemic and daily internet usage.

Key words: Distance Turkish Teaching, Turkish Teacher Candidates, Attitude, Quantitative Research

INTRODUCTION

The COVID-19 pandemic emerged in Wuhan, China on December 1, 2019. This pandemic affected the whole world. Many workplaces were affected by this pandemic. Face-toface work was suspended. One of the sectors affected by this pandemic was the education sector. Although the education sector took a break from schools at first, it later switched to distance education. For example, European Association for International Education (EAIE) announced in early 2020 that most higher education institutions in Europe were trying to develop a plan for the pandemic process (Rumbley, 2020). After the first coronavirus case was announced on March 11, 2020 in Turkey, the transition to distance education was made on March 23, 2020. In the world, as of April 1, 2020, 1.5 billion students in 173 countries transitioned to distance education, and the biggest "online movement" in the history of education in China was recorded in the literature (Internet Society, 2021).

Although distance education has come to the fore more after the coronavirus pandemic, the history of distance education goes back much before the pandemic. According to the records, distance education first came to the fore in 1833, with the announcement in a Swedish newspaper that a composition lesson would be given by mail and in 1840, Isaac Pitman was allowed

to teach shorthair lessons by correspondence in England, so the first application of distance education was realized (Simonson et al., 2015). In Turkey, distance education was first brought to the agenda by John Dewey in 1924, but at a meeting in 1927, it was decided that distance education could not be realized because 90% of Turkey was illiterate. After 1950, the first distance education application in Turkey was realized with the in-service training given to bank officers at Ankara University Faculty of Law (Aydın, 2011; Çallı et al., 2001).

After the COVID-19 pandemic, the concept of emergency distance education has also come to the fore. Emergency distance learning is an alternative temporary system that is offered in case of emergency, in times of crisis, as opposed to offering an experience that was planned from the beginning and designed online (Baran & Sadık, 2021; Sezgin 2021; Hodges et al., 2020). Attitude is a mental sentimental and behavioral response that a person forms against herself/himself an object, a subject or an event based on her/his feelings (İnceoğlu, 2011; Baysal & Tekarslan, 1996). In other words, attitude is not just a thought or feeling; it includes cognitive, emotional, and observable activities that include the individual's cognitive, emotions, and excitements that express herself/himself as belief (Cüceloğlu, 2003). Attitude is a system that facilitates the adaptation of the individual

to the environment. Since attitude can direct the individual's behavior and helps to predict behavior, it aimed to study Turkish teacher candidates' attitudes towards distance Turkish teaching in this study.

Considering the main study subjects related to the attitude towards distance education, one will notice that previous researcher have developed scales to measure attitudes towards distance education (Kışla, 2016; Ağır et al., 2007) as well as attitudes of teachers and prospective teachers towards distance education (Akman, 2021; Kocayiğit & Uşun, 2020; Moçoşoğlu & Kaya, 2020; Özen & Baran, 2020; Yahşi & Kırkıç, 2020; Yenilmez et al., 2017; Yıldız, 2016; Ateş & Altun, 2008). It is noticed that previous research related to the opinions and perceptions of Turkish teachers and Turkish teacher candidates about distance education is available (Kaplan & Gülden, 2021; Bayburtlu, 2020; Karakuş et al., 2020; Özgül et al., 2020), as well as research on the opinions of learners and teachers about distance education of Turkish as a foreign language (Karatay et al., 2021; Yurdakul & Duman, 2021; Güngör et al., 2020). Except for the study of developing an attitude scale towards distance Turkish teaching (Eroğlu, 2021), no research on the attitude towards distance Turkish teaching has been found.

Objective and Research Questions

The current study aims to investigate the attitudes of Turkish teacher candidates towards distance Turkish teaching. More specifically, the following research questions are addressed in the current study:

- Do the attitudes of Turkish teacher candidates towards distance Turkish teaching show an important difference in terms of gender?
- 2. Do the attitudes of Turkish teacher candidates towards distance Turkish teaching show an important difference in terms of whether or not they have a personal computer?
- 3. Do the attitudes of Turkish teacher candidates towards distance Turkish teaching show an important difference in terms of whether or not they took distance education lessons before the COVID-19 pandemic?
- 4. Do the attitudes of Turkish teacher candidates towards distance Turkish teaching show an important difference in terms of daily internet usage?

METHOD

In this study, the relational survey model was used. The relational survey model is a research model that aims to determine the degree of change between two or more variables (Karasar, 2005). In other words, it is the interpretation that a certain part of the change observed in one of the two variables may result from the other variable, but this change is not interpreted in the context of causality (Can, 2014).

Study Group

The study group of this research consists of 3rd and 4th-grade teacher candidates studying at Turkish Education

Department, Education Faculty, Kafkas University Dede Korkurt 2021-2022 Spring Semester. The study was conducted with a total of 133 participants, 77 women, and 56 men. The data on the participants' ownership of a personal computer is given in Table 1.

Table 1 shows that the majority of the participants (93.2%) have a personal computer. The data on the participants' previous experience of distance education lessons before the COVID-19 pandemic is given in Table 2.

Looking at Table 2, we can see that 71.4% of the participants had not taken distance education lessons before the COVID-19 pandemic, while 28.6% had. The length of time the participants spend on the internet daily is given in Table 3.

Looking at Table 3, we note that almost half of the participants (48.1%) spend 1-2 hours daily on the Internet. It is seen that the participants spend the second most time on the Internet for 3-4 hours (37.6) a day.

Data Collection Tool

In this study, the "Attitude Scale towards Distance Turkish Teaching" developed by Eroğlu (2021) was used as a data collection tool. The scale was conducted with a total of 218 Turkish teachers, 136 female, and 82 male, working in Turkey. The scale is prepared as a 5-point Likert type and consists of 23 items and 2 sub-factors (optimism and technology). The total variance explained by the 23 items of the scale and its 2-dimensional structure is 64,174. The highest factor loading value of the scale was .921 and the lowest factor loading value was .563. The fit index values of the scale structure are $\chi^2/df=2.292$, NFI/TLI=.905/.929, CFI=.944, RMSEA=.077. For the reliability of the scale, the Cronbach Alpha value of 23 items is .944, the Cronbach Alpha value

Table 1. Participants' ownership of a PC

Answer	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	124	93.2
No	9	6.8
Total	133	100

Table 2. Participants' previous experience of distance education lessons before the COVID-19 pandemic

Answer	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	38	28.6
No	95	71.4
Total	133	100

Table 3. Time spent on the internet daily

Daily internet usage	Frequency	Percentage
Under 1 hour	9	6.8
1-2 hours	64	48.1
3-4 hours	50	37.6
5+hours	10	7.5
Total	133	100

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of the first factor is .954 and the Cronbach Alpha value of the second factor is .923. Cronbach's Alpha of the data collected within the scope of this study was found to be.958, the optimism dimension was .969, and the technology dimension was .936.

Data Collection

The data of the study were collected through the form prepared in Google Docs. The participants were informed that (i) their personal information would be kept confidential; (ii) their participation was voluntary; (iii) they could leave the study at any time they wished; and (iv) the results would be disclosed to those who were curious about the results of the research. The participants had access to the e-mail address of the researcher and could communicate with the researcher if they needed to. A link was created for the prepared form and the link was shared with the participants, who filled it out and submitted it online.

Analysis of Data

In this study, SPSS 20.0 program was used to analyze the data. The data were analyzed for their normality and showed normal distribution. In the normality analysis, the skewness value was found to be .484 and the kurtosis value .345. According to Tabachnick and Fidell (2013), the fact that these values are between +1.5 and -1.5 indicates that the distribution of data is normal. Based on this result, parametric tests were used to analyze the research data. While analyzing the data, independent samples t-test was used for bivariate cases, and ANOVA was used for cases with more than two variables.

RESULTS

The findings are reported following the order of the research questions.

Contribution of Gender to Attitudes Towards Distance Turkish Teaching

Table 4 shows the results of the independent sample t-test, which was conducted to see whether or not the attitudes of Turkish teacher candidates towards distance Turkish teaching make a difference in terms of gender.

Looking at Table 4, it is seen that the attitudes of Turkish teacher candidates towards distance Turkish teaching do not

differ in terms of gender (t=.726; p>.05). When the sub-dimensions are investigated, it is noticed that although there is no important difference in the optimism dimension (t=.181; p>.05), there is a difference in the technology dimension (t=2.435; p<.05).

Contribution of Owning a PC to Attitudes Towards Distance Turkish Teaching

Table 5 shows the results of the independent sample t-test, which was conducted to see whether or not there is a difference in the attitudes of Turkish teacher candidates towards distance Turkish teaching in terms of whether or not have a personal computer.

Looking at Table 5, it is seen that the attitudes of Turkish teacher candidates towards distance Turkish teaching do not make a significant difference in terms of whether or not have a personal computer (t=1.477; p>.05). Considering the sub-dimensions, although there was no important difference in the technology dimension (t=.318; p>.05), there was a significant difference in the optimism dimension (t=3.996; p<.05).

Contribution of Previous Experiences of Distance Turkish Teaching to Attitudes Towards Distance Turkish Teaching

Table 6 shows the results of the independent sample t-test, which was conducted to see whether or not there is a difference in the attitudes of Turkish teacher candidates towards distance Turkish teaching in terms of whether or not they took distance education lessons before the COVID-19 pandemic.

Looking at Table 6, it is seen that the attitudes of Turkish teacher candidates towards distance Turkish teaching did not differ significantly in terms of whether or not they took distance education lessons before the COVID-19 pandemic (t=1.777; p>.05). Likewise, no significant difference was found in the optimism dimension (t=1.901; t>.05) and the technology dimension (t=.826; t>.05).

Contribution of Daily Internet Usage to Attitudes Towards Distance Turkish Teaching

Table 7 shows the results of the ANOVA conducted to see whether or not there is a difference in the attitudes of Turkish teacher candidates towards distance Turkish teaching in terms of daily internet usage.

Table 4. Turkish teacher candidates' attitudes towards distance Turkish teaching in terms of gender

Dimension	Category	n	M	SS	SD	t	p
Optimism	Woman	77	33.96	10.664	131	0.181	0.857
	Man	56	34.43	17.055			
Technology	Woman	77	29.62	6.529	131	2.435	0.016*
	Man	56	26.71	7.165			
Scale-total	Woman	77	63.58	13.906	131	0.726	0.470
	Man	56	61.14	22.216			

124

0.142

Table 5. Contribution of owning a 1 C to Turkish teacher candidates attitudes towards distance Turkish teaching							
Dimension	Category	n	M	SS	SD	t	p
Optimism	Yes	124	34.82	13.826	131	3.996	0.001**
	No	9	25.00	6.364			
Technology	Yes	124	28.35	6.793	131	0.318	0.751
	No	9	29.11	9.062			

17.970

14.252

131

1.477

Table 5. Contribution of owning a PC to Turkish teacher candidates' attitudes towards distance Turkish teaching

63.17

54.11

Table 6. Turkish teacher candidates' attitudes towards distance Turkish teaching in terms of whether or not they took distance education lessons before the COVID-19 pandemic

Dimension	Category	n	M	SS	SD	t	p
Optimism	Yes	38	37.68	13.555	131	1.901	0.060
	No	95	32.75	13.522			
Technology	Yes	38	29.18	5.913	131	0.826	0.410
	No	95	28.08	7.302			
Scale-total	Yes	38	66.87	16.406	131	1.777	0.078
	No	95	60.83	18.186			

Table 7. Turkish teacher candidates' attitudes towards distance Turkish teaching in terms of daily internet usage

				0	2	0
Dimension	Category	n	M	SS	F	p
Optimism	Under 1 hour	9	34.44	12.837	0.386	0.763
	1-2 hours	64	35.42	14.876		
	3-4 hours	50	32.80	12.755		
	5+hours	10	32.60	11.530		
Technology	Under 1 hour	9	28.56	4.851	0.367	0.777
	1-2 hours	64	27.80	7.076		
	3-4 hours	50	28.86	7.373		
	5+hours	10	29.80	5.554		
Scale-total	Under 1 hour	9	63.00	15.580	0.072	0.975
	1-2 hours	64	63.22	19.249		
	3-4 hours	50	61.66	17.006		
	5+hours	10	62.40	16.695		

Looking at Table 7, it is seen that the attitudes of Turkish teacher candidates towards distance Turkish teaching did not show a significant difference in terms of daily internet usage (F=.072) (p>.05). When the sub-dimensions of the scale are investigated, it is noticed that there is no important difference in the optimism dimension (F=.386) and the technology dimension (F=.367).

DISCUSSION

Scale-total

Yes

No

In this study, Turkish teacher candidates' attitudes towards distance Turkish teaching were investigated in terms of gender, whether or not they have a personal computer, whether or not they took distance education lessons before the COVID-19 pandemic and daily internet usage.

Within the scope of the first research question, it was investigated whether or not the attitudes of Turkish teacher candidates towards distance Turkish teaching constitute an important difference in terms of gender, and it was determined that there was no important result in the scale total and the optimism dimension, but there was a difference in favor of women in the technology dimension. Although studies are revealing that there is no difference in terms of gender in the literature (Ağır, 2007; Ateş & Altun, 2008; Bayram et al., 2019; Moçoşoğlu & Kaya, 2020; Ülkü, 2018), there is a study that found results in favor of women (Alea et al., 2020). Alea et al. (2020) stated that they achieved such a result because the number of women was more than the number of men. In this study, the number of female participants is more than the number of male participants. However, when the items in the technology dimension of the scale are examined, it is seen that there are contents of the 21st-century skills, up-to-date approaches, and software to be used in education. It can be said that because women are more interested in learning and research, there is a result in favor of women in terms of technology.

Within the scope of the second research question, although no significant result was obtained in terms of the total scale and technology dimension of Turkish teacher candidates' attitudes towards distance Turkish teaching in terms of whether or not they have a personal computer, a meaningful result was obtained in favor of those who have a personal computer in the optimism dimension. It can be said that the fact that almost all of the participants have a personal computer has affected this result. When the literature is analyzed, it has been found that individuals with computer experience have developed a positive attitude towards distance education (Ateş & Altun, 2008; Kışla, 2005; Brinkerhoff & Koroghlanian, 2005). The result of this research is that those who have a personal computer are more optimistic towards distance Turkish teaching, and the literature overlaps.

Within the scope of the third research question, it was found that the attitudes of Turkish teacher candidates towards distance Turkish teaching did not make a significant difference in terms of whether or not they took distance education lessons before the COVID-19 pandemic. However, when the analyses are examined, it is seen that the participants who took distance education lessons before the COVID-19 pandemic had higher scores than the participants who did not take lessons. In other words, it is seen that the participants who took lessons with distance education before the COVID-19 pandemic were more optimistic and showed a more positive attitude about distance Turkish teaching than the participants who did not take lessons. It can be deduced that the participants who had experienced the distance education system before the COVID-19 pandemic were more positive about distance Turkish teaching.

Within the scope of the fourth research question, it was investigated whether or the attitudes of Turkish teacher candidates towards distance Turkish teaching make a difference in terms of daily internet usage, and it was found that daily internet usage did not affect distance Turkish teaching.

CONCLUSION

As a result of the research, it has been found that the attitudes of Turkish teacher candidates towards distance Turkish teaching do not make a difference in terms of gender, but women have a more positive view of current technological developments in education. It has been found that Turkish teacher candidates who have a personal computer and take distance education lessons before the COVID-19 pandemic are more optimistic about distance Turkish teaching. However, it has been found that daily internet usage does not affect the attitudes of Turkish teacher candidates towards distance Turkish teaching.

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