



Views of Classroom Teachers on Distance Education in the COVID-19 Pandemic Process

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Abstract:

In this study, the views of classroom teachers on distance education during the COVID-19 pandemic were examined. For this purpose, descriptive survey model, one of the quantitative research methods, was used as a research model. In the 2021-2022 academic year, 441 classroom teachers who were actually working in private and public schools affiliated to the Ministry of National Education in Turkey participated in this research. Convenience sampling method was used in the selection of the study group of the research. The "Teachers' Perceptions of Distance Education Scale" consisting of 37 items, developed by Kurnaz, Kaynar, Şentürk Barışık, and Doğrukök (2020), was used to collect the data. The data was collected online with the help of Google Forms. As a result of the research; According to the average score of the scale, it was revealed that the views of the classroom teachers towards distance education were partially positive, in other words, moderate

Keywords: COVID-19, Pandemic, Distance Education, Classroom Teacher

1. Introduction:

At the end of 2019, COVID-19 (Coronavirus Disease 2019), which was first seen in Wuhan, China, and then affected the whole world, caused many negativities. Countries are trying to overcome the new problems caused by COVID-19, which affects the world, and education administrators strive to continue education activities through distance education so that students are not deprived of education (Özer, 2020). According to the 2019-2020 academic year data of the Ministry of National Education, 15 189 878 students and 942 936 teachers were affected by the closure of schools and other restrictions due to COVID-19 (MEB, 2020). Turkey, like many countries, has sought different solutions in order to reduce the risk of the epidemic. Distance education has been used to continue educational activities in this process. Teachers, students and other stakeholders tried to keep up with the not widely used distance education system in a short time.

2. Importance of the Study:

Switching to a system where most of the educators are unfamiliar may cause some problems. Since the teachers did not have enough experience in distance education, they tried to learn the system by their own means. Considering the student population addressed by classroom teachers and their characteristics (cognitive development periods, attention spans and self-management skills), it can be said that the problems experienced by classroom teachers may be different. In order to keep up with the distance education situation, problems should be identified and solutions should be evaluated. In this direction, investments in quality content, easy-to-use platforms, infrastructure and internet can be made to expand distance education and increase its quality

3. Purpose of the study:

As a result of the research, it is aimed to reveal the problems experienced by the teachers, if any, and to offer solutions to these problems, in order to contribute to the field; "What are the views of classroom teachers about distance education during the Covid-19 pandemic?" The answer to the question has been sought.

4. Methodology :

As a research model, descriptive survey model, one of the quantitative research methods, was used. The study group of this research consists of classroom teachers who actually work in primary schools affiliated to the Ministry of National Education in the 2021-2022 academic year. Convenience sampling method was used in the selection of the study group of the research. Accordingly, after the permission of the research was obtained, the official letter

regarding the application of the scale on a voluntary basis was provided to the schools. In addition, the scale was shared with the teachers through various social communication networks and 441 classroom teachers voluntarily filled the scale form.

5. Analysis :

Due to the pandemic conditions, the scales were applied to the participants online. The scales used to determine the views of teachers and teacher candidates on distance education were transferred to Google Forms separately and two separate online links were created for the scales. Google Forms links were announced separately to primary school teachers working in different provinces of Turkey through social communication channels. The data were transferred to the SPSS program and analyzed. Some statistical values of the scores obtained from the answers given by the participants to the teachers' perceptions of distance education scale are shown in Table 1.

Table 1. Descriptive Statistics of Classroom Teachers' Opinions on Distance Education (UE)

Scale Size	N	\bar{X}	SS
To the Sustainability of UE	441	22,33	5,00
Teachers' Own	441	33,90	6,16
To Teaching Practices in UE	441	25,63	5,07
Their Attitudes Towards UE	441	12,06	3,95
Assignments in UE	441	11,99	2,77
Scale Overall	441	105,9	8,27

According to Table 1, it was seen that the scale applied to determine the opinions of classroom teachers about distance education was at a moderate level with the general average ($\bar{X}=105.93$). When the scale dimensions are examined, the mean of the dimension of maintaining distance education ($\bar{X}=22.33$), the average size of teachers to themselves ($\bar{X}=33.90$), the average size of teaching practices in distance education ($\bar{X}=25.63$), the average size of their attitudes towards distance education ($\bar{X}=12.6$) and the average size of homework in distance education ($\bar{X}=11.99$).

6. Conclusion:

It has been revealed that the general average of the scale applied to determine the views of classroom teachers on distance education is at a moderate level. From this result, it can be said that the teachers' level of view towards distance education is not low or high, and they are partially satisfied with distance education. Aksoy K kosmanlı (2022), in his study examining the perception levels of science and technology teachers regarding distance education, concluded that the teachers' views were moderate. In a similar study in which teachers' views on distance education were investigated, it was seen that teachers' views were at a moderate level (Ateş & Altun, 2008). Deniz (2021) concluded in his study that teachers' views on distance education are moderate. These studies in the literature are similar to the results of the study. Based on these results, it can be concluded that classroom teachers do not view distance education completely negatively, but they need support in distance education. Soydan (2021) concluded in his study that teachers' attitude scores towards distance education are low. This result differs from the research result. Yıldırım (2020) found in his study that the COVID-19 pandemic creates a sense of uncertainty and anxiety in humans. It can be said that the medium level of primary school teachers' views on distance education may be due to the fact that they suddenly switched to a system that was not widely used in primary school before, and the anxiety they experienced due to the pandemic. In addition, the curfew restrictions during the pandemic period and the concerns of the course of the epidemic, the problems of students' access to distance education may have caused the participants to have a partially positive attitude towards distance education.

When the averages of the sub-dimensions of the scale are examined, it has been revealed that the teachers' views on distance education are at a moderate level in terms of the dimension of maintaining distance education, the dimension of teachers themselves, and the dimension of teaching practices in distance education. Similarly, Kumari and Sood (2018) and Aksoy K kosmanlı (2022) found in their research that teachers' views on distance education are moderate. In this context, the research findings are similar to the studies in the literature. It was revealed that the teachers' opinions were low in the dimensions of attitude towards distance education and homework in distance education of the scale used in this study. Similarly, Soydan (2021) concluded in his study that teachers' attitudes towards distance education were low during the epidemic period. The use of distance education method in all lessons instead of face-to-face education during the pandemic process and the various negativities caused by the pandemic in individuals may have caused the participants to have a negative attitude towards distance education.

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