

ELEMENTARY SCHOOL STUDENTS' ATTITUDES TOWARDS INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY COURSES

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As technology has advanced, information technologies have been used at all levels starting from primary schools to university level. The use of information technologies helps students learn better and quicker in a classroom setting. As the importance of information technologies in education sector is well-known, it was included in the school programs in Turkey and the students enrolled at sixth, seventh and eighth grades of elementary schools take Information Technology Course. The inclusion of information technology in school curricula helps students learn how to use those technologies better and grasp the subject well. The purpose of this study is to assess students' attitudes towards Information Technologies Course in a Turkish elementary-school context. It was also aimed to see if the attitudes of the students towards Information technology Course differed in terms of gender, grade level and socio-economic status of the school. The population of this study comprised sixth, seventh and eighth grade students from 15 elementary schools in Elazig, Turkey. The schools were selected by using stratified proportional random sampling procedure. The city is divided into education zones in order to administer and conduct education activities properly. So the city is divided into five education zones. The schools chosen were stratified on the basis of education zones and their socioeconomic conditions. Three schools from each education zone were selected with three levels of socioeconomic status reported by the National Education Office. The sample consisted of sixth, seventh and eighth grade students selected randomly from those elementary schools. The simple random sampling procedure was used to select 75 students from each elementary school. A total of 1.125 students participated in the study. However, out of these 1.125 students, 1.088 completed questionnaire. Of this total number, 27 were either incomplete or filled improperly and were thus eliminated, leaving a sample of 1.061 students. There are 583 boy and 478 girl students in the study. The gender composition of the respondents is 54.95 % male and 45.05 % female. Data for the study were collected through "The Attitude Scale for Information Technology Course". The three-point Likert style scale, developed by Işık and Rıza (2011), included 36 items. Validity and reliability of the scale was measured. Cronbach Alpha reliability coefficient of the scale was calculated to be 0.95, Spearman-Brown correlation coefficient was measured to be 0.94. The independent groups t-test and One way ANOVA were used to analyze the data. Statistically significant differences were observed between student groups. Some useful implications are discussed based on the research findings and some recommendations are offered to conduct Information Technologies Course.

Key words: Elementary school, information technology, information technology course, gender, attitude, socio-economic status