9th International Conference on Theory and Application of Soft Computing, Computing with Words and Perception, ICSCCW 2017, 24-25 August 2017, Budapest, Hungary

Determining student satisfaction in distance education courses

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Abstract

The general purpose of this study is to determine the satisfaction levels of undergraduate students studying at a private university in courses delivered through distance education. A qualitative research methodology is employed in the study. The study is conducted in the spring semester of 2016-2017. The study group consists of students studying at various faculties of a private university. A total of 107 students have participated in the study. "Distance Education Satisfaction Survey" was administered to the students. The data was collected through online survey. The collected data was analyzed with SPSS program. To analyze the data obtained through Distance Education Satisfaction Survey, frequency, mean, standard deviation, minimum and maximum values, One-Way ANOVA and t-test were conducted. The results of the study reveal that students have satisfaction in distance education courses.

1. Introduction

Although distance education and information technologies have been in use for the last twenty years, they affect and change the all the cultural values of mankind as the most rapidly progressing online and offline technology accepted by the society (Bayrak, Aydemir & Karaman, 2017). Today, in the educational sphere, information has become the most significant indicator of the level of progress of societies and university students (Collins, Glover,

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Myers & Watson, 2016). Along with these, the instructional systems for educators and university students are reformed in line with the information and communication technologies in information societies (Daniel & Kamioka,2016). Through distance education university students can reach the targeted information at desired time and place very easily and costs, and loss of time and space can also be minimized (Yavuzalp, Demirel &Canbolat, 2016). Today, our globalized world demands to benefit more from the power of information technologies everyday (Tuncer & Taşpınar). Distance education systems have flexible structures that intend for individualization and learning for university students. Through this flexible structure, it is possible for university students to choose from a wide variety of distant educational environments, supporting web sites and mobile application that would best suit their learning styles (Akdemir & Koszalka, 2008). Furthermore, previous research indicates that university students achieve better through distance education environments that are designed in line with their learning styles (Tulbure, 2011). Through the rapid advance of technology, the structure and significance of education also become vital for students. It is now crucial for university students to integrate distance education environments into traditional structures. The literature reveals that distance education provides support for learning in diverse educational settings for university students. Therefore the research problem of the study in question revolves around the views of the students on distance education.

In summary, distance education is the process of course development aimed for university students by a distant institution that prepares learning tools (Uzunboylu, 2009). Distance education is a system specifically developed for learners who move from fixed educational practices to mobile and flexible ones with regards to time and space (Gökmen, Uysal, Yaşar, Kırksekiz, Güvendi & Horzum, 2017). In general, distance education can be defined as the interactive exchange of data based on web and advanced technological tools and equipment between students and teaching staff who are distant from each other (Odabaşı, 2003). Taking advantage of technology, distance education is a planned teaching system in which teacher and student are brought together in a distant educational setting in various ways.

2. Purpose of the Study

This study aims to determine the satisfaction of students in distance education with regards to the courses delivered through distance education. In order to reach this aim, answers to the following questions are sought:

> 1. How are the general satisfaction levels of university students with regards to the variable of courses delivered through distance education?
> 2. Is there a difference between sex and the satisfaction levels of university students in courses delivered through distance education?
> 3. Is there a difference between participation and the satisfaction levels of university students in courses delivered through distance education?
> 4. Is there a difference between achievement and the satisfaction levels of university students in courses delivered through distance education?
> 5. Is there a difference between the satisfaction levels of university students in courses delivered through distance education with regards to the variable of participation through mobile devices?
> 6. Is there a difference between the satisfaction levels of university students in courses delivered through distance education with regards to the variable of courses?

3. Methodology

This section presents the findings related to the purposes, results with regards to the findings and comments regarding the determination of satisfaction of students in courses delivered through distance education.
The study is conducted with a quantitative methodology and designed to determine satisfaction of students in courses delivered through distance education.

3.1. Instruments

1. Personal Information Form (Demographic Data): Personal Information Form consists of questions to collect data