

Chapter 18

An Analysis of Prospective Teachers' Digital Citizenship Behaviour Norms

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ABSTRACT

This study analyzes prospective teachers' digital citizenship behaviour norms. The sample consists of the seventeen prospective teachers who studied at the University Of Gaziantep Faculty Of Education in the academic year 2009-2010. Qualitative methods were utilized in the collection and the analysis of data. The results indicated the teachers adequately demonstrated behaviour norms regarding digital communication and digital literacy, yet only few showed behaviour norms concerning digital access, digital etiquette, digital commerce, digital rights and responsibilities, digital law, digital health and wellness, and digital security categories. Therefore, these results highlight the fact that the digital citizenship behaviour norms should be included in teacher training programs in Turkey.

1. INTRODUCTION

The impact of technology is one of the most critical issues in education. If we are citizens of Western nations, then technology pervades almost everything in our lives – online banking, shopping, text messaging, movies-on-demand, coordinated traffic flow, light rapid transit scheduling, mobile telephone networks, climate control systems, and

medical information access, to name but a few examples. Even in some developing nations and in former Soviet Republic countries we have come to accept almost without question the proliferation of satellite television dishes and cellular telephones. Despite the ubiquitous appearance of technology in societies around the world, we continue to grapple with how we might best make use of information and communication technology (ICT) in schools (Weber, 2003).

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It can be alleged that one of the best ways of being able to see the future and making massive change decisions on the right time is to be in reconciliation with information technologies. It can be thought that this reconciliation is possible by perceiving the change and then by changing some of our habits consistent with technology. The societies that perceive the change in a right way or the societies that cannot perceive the change and the societies that perceive the change mistakenly may affect their future in a negative or positive way according to their way of perceptions (Dönmez & Sincar, 2008). When it is thought that they are the spotlight corporations of the societies' future, with the aim of foreseeing the future of the societies they take part in, taking right steps towards this and being one of the dynamics of change rather than conforming to change, the schools are key figures.

It is open to every kind of prediction that how the changing and increasing information technology will affect the schools' climate and culture, but it can be said that schools will have a rather different atmosphere than today. The future will demand the teachers to be aware of new cultures that come with informatics technology and to behave in every activity by taking this into consideration. In this sense, it can be said that the teacher will have to behave as a digital citizen rather than teacher.

Communication has acquired a new dimension in the world today with the use of digital devices in communal living and is hence re-defining the concept of community. This concept has been defined as a network society (Castells, 2000) and the individuals who constitute this society have been defined as digital citizens (Berson & VanFossen, 2008; Crow & Longford, 2000; Mossberger et al., 2008; O'Brien, 2008). Digital citizenship has been defined as the ability to take part in on-line society (Carrizales, 2009; Mossberger et al., 2008).

Although the process which forms the basis for the constitution of the concept of digital citizenship have been expressed as transformational, changing

and dividing depending on various viewpoints, the most remarkable point, is that the whole world is going through an irrecoverable digital process (Casula, 2009; Meglio & Garguilo, 2009). A new innovative technology in the information technologies sector becomes outdated within a short time; taking into consideration computer history, a few years now means very little for a computer. Especially, if the time period since the first visual communication systems were used to date is considered, one realizes that digital technologies have gradually become more widespread all over the world (Greenhow, Robelia, & Hughes, 2009). Although there are negative and positive opinions on the fact that digital technologies prevail in every field of life and that digitals are now much more common in the world, the fact that human beings take part in the centre of the research conducted on this issue can be considered as a positive point (Akçay, 2008; Freishtat & Sandlin, 2010; Hand, 2008; Shariff, 2009; Shelly et al., 2004; Yu, 2006). The OECD (Organisation for Economic Co-Operation and Development) reports which are published annually indicate that countries which have a rich digital infrastructure also have a strong economy and as a result the people living in such countries access information technologies more easily. According to the 2009 report, Turkey, which is a developing country, has done a lot to ensure individual's access to internet, but it still lags behind among OECD member states in terms of the number of wide band internet subscribers. Although the number of wide band internet subscriber is low compared with that of the other member countries, the data shows that the number of subscriber who made subscription within 5 years between the second quarter of 2005 and second quarter of 2009 is 6.446.374 and the number of subscribers increased by 7,49 folds making Turkey the third country among the OECD members in terms of the number of subscribers (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development Secretariat, 2010).

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