Curriculum change to increasing student motivation in distance education and evaluation of teaching methods

Mudança do currículo para aumentar a motivação do aluno na educação a distância e avaliação dos métodos de ensino

Fahriye Altinay¹
Betul Yıkıcı²
Gokmen Dagli³
Zehra Altinay⁴
Mehmet Altinay⁵

Abstract
The aim of this research is to evaluate the motivation of secondary school students in distance education as a result of the change of course curricula and the change of teaching methods. Qualitative research methods were used in this study. The study group of the research was formed with a total of 80 participants, including secondary education teachers in Northern Cyprus. While forming the study group, snowball sampling method was chosen from purposive sampling methods. As a data collection tool in the study, semi-structured interview form and semi-structured interview questions were prepared and research questions were asked. The first dimension of the research was created within the scope of revealing the views on the state of perceptions and thoughts about the effect of the change of course curricula in

¹Doctor of Pedagogical Sciences, Near East University, North Cyprus, Nicosia Campus, Northern part of Cyprus, Mersin 10, Turkey. E-mail: fahriye.altinay@neu.edu.tr
²Doctor of Pedagogical Sciences, Kyrenia University, North Cyprus, Kyrenia Campus, Northern part of Cyprus, Mersin 10, Turkey. E-mail: betul.yikici@kyrenia.edu.tr
³Doctor of Pedagogical Sciences, Kyrenia University, North Cyprus, Kyrenia Campus, Northern part of Cyprus, Mersin 10, Turkey. E-mail: gokmen.dagli@kyrenia.edu.tr
⁴Doctor of Pedagogical Sciences, Near East University, North Cyprus, Nicosia Campus, Northern part of Cyprus, Mersin 10, Turkey. E-mail: zehra.altinaygazi@neu.edu.tr
⁵Doctor of Pedagogical Sciences, Near East University, North Cyprus, Nicosia Campus, Northern part of Cyprus, Mersin 10, Turkey. E-mail: mehmet.altinay@kyrenia.edu.tr
distance education on student motivation. The second dimension of the study was created within the scope of revealing the opinions of teachers about the state of perceptions and thoughts about the methods of creating student motivation in distance education. Within the scope of these findings, it was concluded that according to the opinions of the teachers, any change in the curriculum subjects was not at the desired level, and although the teaching time of 40 minutes in classical education was reduced to 30 minutes in distance education, there was no problem in educating the curriculum. In addition to these, it is seen that teachers engage students in distance education, and in the methods they apply to increase their motivation, teachers chat with students at the beginning of the lesson, give morale speech, use visual materials and talk about everyday issues.

**Keywords:** Curriculum. Distance Education. Teaching Methods. Quality of Learning.

**Resumo**

O objetivo desta pesquisa é avaliar a motivação dos alunos do ensino médio em educação a distância, como resultado da mudança de currículos de curso e da mudança de métodos de ensino. Métodos qualitativos de pesquisa foram utilizados neste estudo. O grupo de estudo da pesquisa foi formado com um total de 80 participantes, incluindo professores do ensino secundário no Norte de Chipre. Durante a formação do grupo de estudo, o método de amostragem com bola de neve foi escolhido a partir de métodos de amostragem intensiva. Como uma ferramenta de coleta de dados no estudo, foram preparados formulários de entrevista semiestruturada e perguntas semiestruturadas de entrevista e perguntas de pesquisa foram feitas. A primeira dimensão da pesquisa foi criada no âmbito da revelação das visões sobre o estado das percepções e pensamentos acerca do efeito da mudança de currículo dos cursos de educação a distância sobre a motivação dos alunos. A segunda dimensão do estudo foi criada no âmbito da revelação das opiniões dos professores sobre o estado das percepções e pensamentos sobre os métodos de criação de motivação estudantil na educação a distância. No escopo dessas constatações, concluiu-se que, de acordo com a opinião dos professores, qualquer mudança nas disciplinas curriculares não estava no nível desejado e, embora o tempo de ensino de 40 minutos na educação clássica tenha sido reduzido para 30 minutos na educação a distância, não houve problema na educação do currículo. Além disso, observa-se que os professores engajam os alunos na educação a distância, e nos métodos que aplicam para aumentar sua motivação, os professores conversam com os alunos no início da aula, dão discurso moral, usam materiais visuais e falam sobre questões cotidianas.

**Keywords:** Currículo. Educação a distância. Métodos de ensino. Qualidade do aprendizado.
Introduction

The concept of distance education appears as a concept that was first used at the end of the 19th century and goes back to the 1840s (Holmberg, 2005; Schlosser & Anderson, 1994; Simonson, Smaldino, & Zvacek, 2015). Accordingly, distance education; It includes learner, instructor, subject and communication variables, exceeds some of the limitations of traditional education, and offers learning opportunities suitable for the environment and individual competencies of the students; there are no temporal and spatial limitations, the learning process and student support services are planned and prepared by an institution; It has been defined as an alternative education system, mostly based on individual learning, where technical materials and telecommunication systems are used to provide student-teacher interaction and access to content, allowing individuals to meet their lifelong learning desire (Morabito, 1997; Liu & Ginther, 1999; Yenal, 2009; Bertiz, 2018; Erfidan, 2019).

In distance education applications, the learner is more independent in participating and continuing the applications compared to other education applications. At this point, we come across the concept of motivation, which is directly related to the beginning and the continuation of a behavior, makes the individual ready for the behavior, and expresses the subjectivity of the action (Bakırçoğlu, 2012; Buendicho, 2023; Ormord, 2018). In this model, in which internet infrastructure is used, some elements such as e-mails that replace traditional mail, electronic resources that are used instead of printed materials and serve as alternatives, video conference calls that provide two-way interaction and Learning Management Systems (ÖYS) are seen (Ekinci, 2015; Pektekín, 2013). In this context, distance education in today's conditions; It can be defined as an up-to-date education model that can be sustained independently of time and place through existing technological opportunities, where written, audio or video courses can be taught in a virtual environment, and where participants can watch these lessons again whenever they want (Clark, 2020; Orakçıoğlu, 2019). Although distance education has many advantages; There are also some limitations such as the possibility of technical problems, the high costs of necessary infrastructure and technical equipment for applications, the inability to provide face-to-face education relations adequately, the need for a certain readiness for both the trainer and the student, and the inefficiency for applied courses (Bates and Bates), 2005; Cagiltay et al., 2007; Isman, 2011; Z. Kaya, 2002).

By taking a more active role in today's education and training activities, digital technologies; It enables the formation of rich learning environments that put the learner in the
center and facilitate access to the opportunities offered (Abdüsselam, 2019). Especially the fact that these technologies allow creating synchronous (synchronous) or asynchronous (asynchronous) learning networks can be seen as an important advantage that technology adds to distance education (Beldarrain, 2006). There are systems that can be used in the form of social networks, content management systems, learning management systems, massive open online courses (MOOCs) and many more models or platforms in the distance education process. Thus, it has become an important field of study to search for ways to conduct distance education, which has become increasingly widespread, in different models and platforms. In this case, it is more important not only to have advanced technological opportunities in the distance education process, but also to increase the quality of education by using these technologies in an appropriate and planned way (Sayan, 2020).

It is known that there are environments that offer instructional materials in the context of distance education in our country. According to Kandemir (2020), the most common environments are listed as EBA (Educational Information Network), Vitamin, Dyned, Okulistik, Morpa Campus. As can be seen, it is understood that there are environments that offer materials and activities related to distance education in the field of education. When the literature is examined, it can be said that the studies on the implementation of the distance education system originating from Covid-19 and determining the problems related to this process in our country tend to increase. In addition, it should be noted that the studies aimed at directly identifying the difficulties experienced by classroom teachers in distance education during the Covid-19 epidemic are relatively limited. In the research conducted by Koçoğlu et al., (2020), it is noted that Turkey is quite successful in distance education carried out due to the Covid-19 outbreak. In addition, the opinions of the teachers that the distance education given in this process is sufficient is extremely important. Similarly, Şumuer and Arslan (2020) drew attention to the difficulties experienced by teachers in distance education applied during the Covid-19 epidemic in their research.

The aim of this research is to evaluate the motivation of secondary school students in distance education as a result of the change of course curricula and the change of teaching methods in order to increase the motivation of secondary school students in distance education. In this context, answers to the following research questions were sought.

1. According to the teachers' opinions, how has the effect of the change in the curriculum of distance education on student motivation been?

2. According to the opinions of the teachers, how did the new teaching methods in distance education affect student motivation?
Method

2.1 Model of the Research

Qualitative research methods were used in this study. “Qualitative research can be defined as research in which qualitative data collection methods such as observation, interview and document analysis are used and a qualitative process is followed to reveal perceptions and events in a realistic and holistic way in the natural environment.” (Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2018).

2.2 Data Collection Tool

As a data collection tool in the study, semi-structured interview form and semi-structured interview questions were prepared and research questions were asked. In the qualitative research approach, in-depth interview (face-to-face interview), direct observation and document analysis techniques are generally used to collect data (Legard, Keegan, & Ward, 2003). The data of this research were obtained through interview forms, which cannot be directly observed with other data collection tools, which provide the opportunity to understand the perspectives of the participants on the subject and which are frequently preferred in the qualitative research approach. In the interview form technique method, the reasons that form the basis of the answers of the participants are also the source of revealing many dimensions such as feelings, thoughts and beliefs (Legard, Keegan, & Ward, 2003). The semi-structured interview form created within the scope of this study includes two open-ended semi-structured interview questions.

2.3 Working Group

The study group of the research was formed with a total of 80 participants, including secondary education teachers in Northern Cyprus. While forming the study group, snowball sampling method was chosen from purposive sampling methods.

2.4 Analysis of Data

The first is the interviews with the participants within the scope of the data collection tool. According to the opinions of the interviewed participants, the answers given to each
The data obtained from the answers to the research interview questions were analyzed by content analysis. In content analysis, data is analyzed in four stages (Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2018).

1. Coding the Data: In this first stage of the content analysis, after each participant was given a number and the interviews were recorded, the data obtained from the participants were analyzed within the framework of the research, divided into meaningful parts, and the conceptual meaning was named and coded. For the reliability calculation of the research, the average was calculated as 91% by using the reliability formula suggested by Miles and Huberman (1994).

2. Finding Themes: At this stage, the codes determined during the coding phase of the data were considered as separate categories and evaluated as separate themes.

3. Organizing and Defining the Data According to Codes and Themes: At this stage, the opinions of the participants were explained in a language that the reader could understand, and the opinions were presented to the reader at first hand.

4. Interpretation of Findings: The interpretation of the findings, which are described and presented in detail, by the researcher and some results are explained at this last stage.

Findings and Comments

The findings of the research were analyzed in a way to answer each research question and the results of this analysis are given below, respectively.

Dimension I Findings: Findings on the status of perceptions and thoughts about the effect of the change in the curriculum of distance education on student motivation.

The first dimension of the research was created within the scope of revealing the views on the state of perceptions and thoughts about the effect of the change of course curricula in distance education on student motivation. In this context, 80 participants were asked for their opinions. The answers given to this question were coded and their themes were extracted, and the distributions of these themes are given in Table 1 and the graph.
Curriculum Change in Distance Education

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CATEGORY</th>
<th>CODE</th>
<th>FREQUENCY (N)</th>
<th>PERCENT (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No change</td>
<td></td>
<td>12</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summarizing the topics</td>
<td></td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Giving feedback</td>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fast delivery of lessons</td>
<td></td>
<td>16</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Full implementation of the curriculum</td>
<td></td>
<td>22</td>
<td>28%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Slow delivery of lessons</td>
<td></td>
<td>36</td>
<td>45%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Increasing the jokes on the subject</td>
<td></td>
<td>7</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Curriculum reduction</td>
<td></td>
<td>29</td>
<td>36%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appropriateness of reducing the duration of the lesson</td>
<td></td>
<td>38</td>
<td>48%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1: Findings regarding the state of perceptions and thoughts about the effect of the change in the curriculum of distance education on student motivation
Source: the Author

As a result of the change of course curricula in distance education, within the scope of the findings regarding the effect of perceptions and thoughts on student motivation; they stated that according to the opinions of the teachers, any change in the curriculum issues was not at the desired level. It is understood that they apply the curriculum applied in classical education more and they prefer to change or reduce the curriculum within the scope of distance education less. They stated that there was an increase in the speed of the lectures in the classrooms and they encountered difficulties in understanding the subjects due to the high speed of the lectures. However, in line with the opinions of some school administrators and inspectors, they said that some teachers have practices to reduce course subjects in some curriculum subjects. Within the scope of the course curriculum, it is understood from the opinions of the participants that they try to prevent the students from getting bored in the lessons by reducing the course duration from 40 minutes before to 30 minutes. They stated that especially in the teaching of applied course subjects such as technology design, painting, etc., the number of project subjects increased. It is seen that teachers make two kinds of applications in the curriculum application in the distance education process. The first group of teachers said that the curriculum remained unchanged and the subjects were given more quickly in this process. The second group of teachers, on the other hand, stated that the subjects were simplified and that the subjects were given according to the learning speed of the student. It was also stated that although the duration of the lecture, which was 40 minutes in classical education, decreased to 30 minutes in distance education, there was no problem in educating the curriculum.

In line with these thoughts, some participant opinions are as follows;

“There has been a change in the curriculum. I try to give the topics as simple summary as I can. I do not give some subjects at all or I only briefly pass them on verbally”. (Teacher, 12)
“We were able to teach faster and more meaningful lessons. While 40 minutes in classes is not enough, 30 minutes are more meaningful and more fluent since time loss is minimized in online trainings. We can also teach our lessons according to the curriculum.” (Teacher, 27)

**Findings of Dimension II: Findings related to the state of perceptions and thoughts about teachers' methods of creating student motivation in distance education.**

The second dimension of the study was created within the scope of revealing the opinions of teachers about the state of perceptions and thoughts about the methods of creating student motivation in distance education. In this context, 80 participants were asked for their opinions. The answers given to this question were coded and their themes were extracted, and the distributions of these themes are given in Table 2 and the graph.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CATEGORY</th>
<th>CODE</th>
<th>FREQUENCY (N)</th>
<th>PERCENT (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Methods of Creating Student Motivation in Distance Education</td>
<td>Do not chat</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Creating visual materials</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Prepare engaging slides</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Determining the project selection according to the interests of the students</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Giving uplifting speeches</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Showing short videos</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Increasing activities, focusing on documentaries</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Increasing communication on a 7x24 basis</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Increasing current issues, legends and storytelling</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2: Findings on the state of perceptions and thoughts about teachers' methods of creating student motivation in distance education

Source: the Author

Within the scope of the findings regarding the state of perceptions and thoughts about the methods of creating student motivation in distance education, it is seen that the teachers chat with the students at the beginning of the lesson, give morale speech, use visual materials, and talk about everyday issues in the methods they apply to increase the motivation of the students in distance education. It is understood from the participant opinions that the teachers organized entertaining activities, watched documentaries, told jokes, stories and legends in order to raise the morale of the students. In addition, it is observed that they increase their communication with students through social media. In addition, it is understood from the opinions of the participants that they watch videos about the course topics, prepare interesting slides, focus on projects, and pay attention to the projects that students do in their project selection, within the scope of creating and increasing the motivation of students in distance education.

In line with these thoughts, some participant opinions are as follows;
“In order to increase the motivation of the students during the distance education process, I created a sense of belonging and made the students feel understood even if they were far away. I encouraged students to talk about the topic of the day by explaining their point of view. Before starting the lesson, I used methods to increase their motivation by having short conversations.” (Teacher, 66)

“I made you watch enjoyable and motivating short videos about our subject from the beginning of the lesson” (Teacher 10)

“I tried to motivate my parents and teenagers by talking on the phone and making evaluations and briefings about this process.” (Teacher, 47)

“It was determined that the teachers used visual videos to attract the attention of the students in the course of the lesson.” (Teacher, 56).

**Conclusion and Recommendations**

The findings of the research were analyzed in a way to answer each research question and the results of this analysis are given below, respectively.

**Results of Dimension I: Results regarding the state of perceptions and thoughts about the effect of the change in the curriculum of distance education on student motivation.**

The first dimension of the research was created within the scope of revealing the views on the state of perceptions and thoughts about the effect of the change of course curricula in distance education on student motivation. In this context, 80 participants were asked for their opinions. The answers given to this question were coded and the themes were extracted, and the results regarding these themes are presented below. In this context;

As a result of the change of course curricula in distance education, within the scope of the findings regarding the effect of perceptions and thoughts on student motivation; they stated that according to the opinions of the teachers, any change in the curriculum issues was not at the desired level. It is understood that they apply the curriculum applied in classical education more and they prefer to change or reduce the curriculum within the scope of distance education less. This result Kaynar et al. (2020) coincides with the results of the research. They stated that there was an increase in the speed of the lectures in the classrooms and they encountered difficulties in understanding the subjects due to the high speed of the lectures. However, in line with the opinions of some school administrators and inspectors, they said that some teachers have practices to reduce course subjects in some curriculum subjects. This result is in parallel with the study of Keskin and Özer (2020). Within the scope of the course curriculum, it is understood from the opinions of the participants that they try to prevent the students from getting bored in the lessons by reducing the course duration from 40 minutes before to 30 minutes. They stated that especially in the teaching of applied course subjects such as technology design, painting, etc., the number of project subjects increased. It is seen
that teachers make two kinds of applications in the curriculum application in the distance education process. The first group of teachers said that the curriculum remained unchanged and the subjects were given more quickly in this process. The second group of teachers, on the other hand, stated that the subjects were simplified and that the subjects were given according to the learning speed of the student. It was also stated that although the duration of the lecture, which was 40 minutes in classical education, decreased to 30 minutes in distance education, there was no problem in educating the curriculum. The results of Karadeniz (2020)'s study overlap with the results of this study.

In this context, according to the findings and results of the research, it is suggested in this study to reduce the curriculum subjects in distance education, to shorten the teaching time in the classrooms, to reduce the course hours, and to give more weight to the projects, especially within the scope of applied course subjects. Similar suggestions can be seen in the study of Duzgun and Sulak (2020).

**Results of Dimension II: Findings on the state of perceptions and thoughts about teachers' methods of creating student motivation in distance education.**

In the second dimension of the research, the following results were reached within the scope of revealing the opinions of teachers about the methods of creating student motivation in distance education. In this context;

Within the scope of the findings regarding the state of perceptions and thoughts about the methods of creating student motivation in distance education, it is seen that the teachers chat with the students at the beginning of the lesson, give morale speech, use visual materials, and talk about everyday issues in the methods they apply to increase the motivation of the students in distance education. This result of the research is in parallel with the results of Kurtüncü and Kurt (2020). It is understood from the participant opinions that the teachers organized entertaining activities, watched documentaries, told jokes, stories and legends in order to raise the morale of the students. In addition, it is observed that they increase their communication with students through social media. In addition, it is understood from the opinions of the participants that they watch videos about the course topics, prepare interesting slides, focus on projects, and pay attention to the projects that students do in their project selection, within the scope of creating and increasing the motivation of students in distance education. It is seen that there is a similarity and overlap in the results of this research with the study of Kurnaz and Serçemeli (2020).

In this context, according to the findings and results of the research, in order to increase the participation of students in distance education, motivation speech at the beginning of the
Curriculum change to increasing student motivation in distance education and evaluation of teaching methods

lesson, more conversations with students, emphasis on motivational speeches, increasing the use of visual materials, the use of fun activities, further strengthening of communication with students, more opportunities for projects. It is suggested in this research to give more space and to tell the jokes and legends about the subjects together with the videos about the subjects. Karakus et al. (2020)'s recommendations and the recommendations of this study are in parallel.

References


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