

Media as a Learning-Teaching Tool in the Context of Media Literacy from Turkish Language Teacher Candidates' Perspective

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ARTICLE INFO

Article history

Received: June 18, 2021

Accepted: October 16, 2021

Published: October 31, 2021

Volume: 9 Issue: 4

Conflicts of interest: None

Funding: None

Publication Note: A part of this study was presented as an oral presentation at EJER 2019 in Turkey.

ABSTRACT

This study aims to reveal the Turkish language teacher candidates' opinions about the media as a learning-teaching tool in the context of media literacy. It has been conducted utilising the basic qualitative research pattern, one of the qualitative research types, with twenty participating teacher candidates studying in the last year of their university education. In the study, a semi-structured interview form is employed as the data collection tool. The collected data are analysed based on the content analysis method, one of the qualitative analysis methods. The results obtained in the study have shown that social media has a central place in Turkish teacher candidates' media perception; when they were asked about the media tools for teaching, they answered the internet and YouTube primarily. The participants stressed that the media as a teaching tool offers teachers alternative ways and facilitates the educational process. For these reasons, they consider the media a usable teaching tool. The media tools they use the most in their own learning processes are the internet, YouTube and Instagram. The teacher candidates plan to use media tools while performing their jobs. Moreover, the teacher candidates, who consider utilising media tools in the learning-teaching process necessary, plan to advise their students to learn through media.

Key words: Media, Media as a Learning-teaching Tool, Social Media Tools, Teacher Candidates

INTRODUCTION

The changing world and the educational systems that ensure this change's continuity functionally offer their target audience the education environment for every field from everywhere. In these vigorous educational systems, the media platforms have also been carrying on, obtaining a new dimension day after day. Although it is a given that the media platforms' development in the historical process has reflected on educational environments, this effect has been much more paramount in recent years. During this period, the degree of utilisation of the internet, and of the media platforms that have taken place in our lives through it, has significantly increased.

The mass media tools, whose use has increased as the internet has eliminated timewise and spatial barriers, have delivered messages to large numbers of individuals simultaneously and ensured the embrace of the cultural elements stemming from them by users (Konuk & Güntaş, 2019). If looked at the posts shared through the media, it is seen that social media and digital communities are growing day by day. The images, applications, videos, sounds, games and others are being shared, uploaded and commented on this growing platform (Öztürk & Talas, 2015). This situation reveals the importance of the concept of visual communication which covers varying tools of communication (from

smartphone to tablet computers and internet technology) flourished with the developments in computer technology and has almost become a body part of people (Öztay & Koç, 2020). Because, visual communication is the basis of the communication conducted through media shares, and social sharing platforms, where visuality is at the forefront of media tools, are becoming increasingly crucial every day.

Social software is defined as a web-based learning application that enhances group collaboration and interaction, creates social sharing spaces and enables information exchange (Barlett-Bragg, 2006). Moreover, social media is virtual social life platforms created by people through the internet functioning as networks through which individuals define themselves and communicate with other people who share the same or different cultural backgrounds (Tiryakioğlu & Erzurum, 2011). People differing in their purposes come together and share posts on social media platforms without time and place problems.

Nowadays, billions of people use social media for various reasons such as self-development, business, communication, education and entertainment. Social media, which have become part and parcel of daily life, is utilised at home, work, school, public transportation via different devices such as mobile phones, tablets, TV and computers without spatial and timewise restrictions (Bold & Yadamsuren,

2019). Besides, social media tools as pedagogical materials provide benefits in terms of connectivity and social rapport, collaborative information discovery and sharing, and content creation (McLoughlin & Lee, 2007). While social media enables students to collect and share information, it effectively creates cooperation channels among them and with their teachers (Faizi et al., 2013). In general, social media and media tools offer different ways of shaping the learning process for both teachers and students by supporting the educational process in various ways and serving as a means of socialisation in daily life.

While social software enables teachers to empower the educational process through active learning, creativity, problem-solving, cooperation and multi-faceted interaction, it also promotes students' academic success, questioning and alternative thinking skills (Tiryakioğlu & Erzurum, 2011). Besides, social software offers benefits in reflecting the student's preferences to teaching, provides instant feedback to students, quickly identifies students' needs, improves communication, creates a collaborative atmosphere, increases student participation, helps teachers to build networks in the teaching process, prepares students for the future, and creates professional learning communities led by teachers (Blazer, 2012). Through social software that offers students tools for controlling their learning, students learn by communicating on social platforms rather than working individually with management systems' opportunities (McLoughlin & Lee, 2007). Nevertheless, it is also a fact that media tools have some disadvantages alongside their positive contributions to educational environments. As Blazer stated, the ill usage of social software brings risks such as cyberbullying, exposure to inappropriate content, violation of online security, revealing private information, decreasing face-to-face communication, and distraction from schoolwork (Blazer, 2012). The prevention of the damages caused by social software, which is an active component of the learning-teaching process as a media tool, is only possible with an appropriate and responsible use. This requires accurate reading of information received through the media, in other words, literacy.

Literacy is described as the capacity to read, write, talk, and listen, as well as the ability to communicate effectively and comprehend written material. It is a method of comprehending and interpreting objects, facts, and events in a sophisticated and detailed manner (Altun, 2005). Literacy has evolved from being reliant on written and printed sources to being digital as a result of technological advancements. Digital media took the place of newspapers and books, and distance communication channels took the place of face-to-face interactions (Aytaş & Kaplan, 2017). Individuals must be active in studying information and communication technologies, contribute to personal development with technology, and be able to use technology to solve daily problems to be considered digitally literate (Özerbaş & Kuralbayeva, 2018). This necessity is significant in terms of emphasizing the importance of media literacy.

Media literacy is vital in terms of providing the abilities to correctly understand, interpret, and use media, as well as maintaining social order (Aksu Bektaş & Alver, 2020).

Media literacy is based on media education, which encompasses not just the usage of television and the internet, but also newspapers, radio, and even printed books (Kıran, 2020). All new communication technology products, such as computers and the internet, as well as traditional communication instruments, such as television, newspapers, and magazines, should be covered in media education (Uyar & Asrak Hasdemir, 2020). Receiving a proper and conscientious media education will ensure that the messages in the media are accurately interpreted. Media tools have gone beyond being a component of social life in today's culture, and they now play an active role in the learning-teaching process. This assumption is backed up by research in the field of education.

The scope of studies on media tools spans a variety of topics such as learning through media and social media (Kozma, 1991; Devi et al., 2019; Konuk & Güntaş, 2019; Faizi et al., 2013; Chen & Bryer, 2012; Gruzdt et al., 2018), use of media tools by teachers (Manca & Ranieri, 2016; Akkaya & Kanadlı, 2019), use of media in language learning (Kitchakarn, 2016; Rao, 2014), use of social media in university education (Toğay et al., 2013; Qureshi et al., 2014), and use of a particular social media tool in learning processes (Hesieh, 2017; Evans, 2014; Chawinga, 2017; Gon, & Rawekar, 2017). These studies, being conducted with teachers and university students, focus on using social media tools in the learning-teaching process. There has been no study detected in the literature that focuses on the teacher candidates' perspectives, particularly of those who will give mother language education, towards media tools as a learning-teaching tool.

Studies conducted show the motivations for using media tools and how widely they are used in learning environments. Changes in technology have reflected on educational environments through social software. The Turkish teaching program (2019) highlights the concept of digital competency, and it emphasises the importance of media tools and the accompanying social software in the education process. The program emphasises that the highest level of efficiency should be utilised from the opportunities provided by technology, media tools, and social software.

The Turkish teaching program and the Turkish lesson's content show that this lesson aims to make students competent in every field. In addition to the mission of helping students get competent in their mother tongue, it is the Turkish teachers' task to raise students who know how to control their learning process and who utilise media tools actively within it. At this point, teachers' education is crucial as how the teacher candidates conceive media tools during their training, whether they effectively use them in the learning process, and their professional plans about media tools are essential. It is a well-known fact that experiences gained in the training process shape and affect teachers' professional careers. It is essential to evaluate the Turkish teacher candidates' views on the use of media as a learning-teaching tool from different aspects.

Purpose and Sub-purposes

The purpose of this study is to understand what Turkish language teacher candidates experience about the media as a

tool for learning and teaching in the context of media literacy. The study's sub-objectives are to identify:

1. Turkish teacher candidates' media perceptions as a learning tool,
2. Turkish teacher candidates' perception of media tools' usability as a learning-teaching tool,
3. the media tools used by Turkish language teacher candidates in learning process (Reasons and effectiveness),
4. Turkish teacher candidates' views on permanent learning through the media,
5. Turkish teacher candidates' views on using media tools in the learning-teaching process in their professional lives,
6. Turkish teacher candidates' views on guiding their students to learn through the media in the learning-teaching process; and
7. the analogies made by Turkish teacher candidates about media as a learning tool.

METHOD

This study, aiming to reveal the different aspects of Turkish teacher candidates' views on the use of media as a learning and teaching tool in the context of media literacy, employs the "basic qualitative research" design. Basic qualitative research is based on a hermeneutic approach even though it is not incorporated by phenomenological, grounded (implicit) theory, narrative analysis, critical or ethnographic qualitative studies. In basic qualitative research, researchers are concerned with how people interpret their lives, construct their world, and perceive their experiences (Merriam, 2013). This study employs basic qualitative research as it focuses on the Turkish teacher candidates' perceptions, experiences about media as a learning tool and these experiences' reflections.

The Population of Study

In determining the study group, the purposive sampling type was adopted to enable the researcher to easily reach the participants and accurately carry out the data collection process. Twenty Turkish language teacher candidates, who were senior students while this study was conducted, participated in the study. The rationale behind choosing them as participants was that they had taken all the courses in their program. The participants have completed the school experience lesson and continue their teaching practice. Knowledge and experience of media tools was another factor in participants' selection. The people in the study group have participated in the study voluntarily.

Data Collection Tool and Procedure

In the study, a "semi-structured interview form" was used as a data collection tool to reveal the teacher candidates' opinions in depth. The form that includes the questions determined by the researcher was developed drawing on the relevant literature. The study consulted Turkish-language experts to detect whether the questions serve the purpose or not. After benefiting from the expert opinions, the semi-structured interview

form consisting of nine basic questions was finalised. A preliminary interview held with a person who did not participate in the study group showed no problem with the questions, and the data collection process started. To this end, interviews were conducted with the teacher candidates and the conversations were recorded.

Analysis of the Data

The data obtained in the study were analysed based on content analysis, one of the qualitative analysis methods. Initially, a significant portion of the data was coded by the researcher and a field expert separately. A great deal of consistency was observed when the coders came together and compared their codes. The codes upon which an agreement was not reached were discussed, and the researcher continued coding alone. After analysing the whole data set, the codes similar to each other or have the same meaning were merged. During the merging transaction, expert opinion was also consulted. The reliability of the analysis was ensured through these transactions. In the following phase, the codes related to each other were categorised. The categories and codes in these categories are presented as findings under the interview questions' themes. The findings are illustrated with the participants' opinions.

FINDINGS

The study's findings, which aims to reveal the different aspects of Turkish language teacher candidates' opinions about media as a learning-teaching tool in the context of media literacy, are presented under themes formed based on the interview questions.

The Turkish Teacher Candidates' Media Perceptions as a Learning Tool

The study participants were asked what their perceptions about media in general and media as a learning tool were. It was observed that most of the participants perceived the media as social media. Social media is followed by television, computer, internet, telephone, and radio as media tools. The newspaper, which is also a media tool, was expressed by only one teacher candidate. It is seen that the participants variously define the media as mass communication tools, technological tools that deliver information quickly, tools that inform about recent developments and as tools for leisure activities

While participant T1 expressed, "For me, what the term media first evokes is social media, as it is widely used". Participant T2 said, "The media used to evoke television, radio and computers in the past. Now, it evokes social media" and continued by listing the social media platforms that came to his mind: "Twitter, Instagram and Facebook". T9 focusing on the media's definition, emphasised the aspect of media as a means to spread information by stating, "What the media evokes for me is that people using technological tools to access information".

When the teacher candidates were asked about their perceptions of "media as a learning tool", they responded with

YouTube, the internet, telephone, newspaper, television and radio. As a learning tool, social media platforms were defined as tools that enable following up the recent developments, presenting different ideas and sharing information. Among these platforms, participants stated that YouTube provides users with up-to-date information, lecture videos and opportunity to receive distance education; that the internet enables them to keep up with the recent developments; while the others (telephone, newspaper, television, radio) are considered as tools that provide easy access to up-to-date information.

The participants focusing on the learning-tool media as a source of information stressed its functions of offering information and learning resources, providing shortcut information, easy use and acting as a teacher. When it comes to its auxiliary role for education, the participants emphasised that it facilitates and contributes to the educational process, provides effective-permanent learning, and offers alternative ways to teachers and reduces their workload. Some participants have focused on the harmful aspects of the media as a learning tool. The media's expressed harmful aspects are as follows: misuse of it poses a danger, causes information pollution, and may strengthen the dependency on ready-made information.

In terms of the teachers' workload in the educational process, T6 stated that "*Media as a learning tool helps reduce the teachers' workload in the learning-teaching process*". Regarding the media's effects on the educational process, T13 stated that "*The media are tools that facilitate education*".

The Turkish Teacher Candidates' Perception of Media Tools' Usability as a Learning-Teaching Tool

More than half of the study participants stated that the media tools could be utilised as learning tools. These opinions are discussed in two dimensions: educational and structural. The participants' opinions supporting media usability in the educational process were as follows: it offers alternative ways of learning to students, eliminates the monotony in education, activates students, creates an effective learning environment and provides permanent learning. The views expressed in its structural dimension are that media makes information easily accessible, that it is time and economic-friendly, a necessity of the age, and easily accessible. The opinion of one of T11 exemplifies these findings:

"Media tools make information quickly accessible for us from everywhere. They enable us to reach the source we want. For this reason, using them makes our personal life easier and us more competent" (T11).

Participants favouring partial usability for media tools stated their opinions with a focus on learning and usage. In the learning dimension, the participants emphasised that the media tools are not sufficient for learning and cannot replace teachers. In the usage dimension, they stated that the media tools are used for immoral purposes and that the information is obtained without questioning through them, consequently making people lazy. The opinion of T8, who argued that the media tools could not replace teachers, is as follows:

"I do not think the media can replace teachers, but it has a strong influence. Nevertheless, it can only play a supplementary role in the education system" (T8).

Another participant with a negative opinion stated that there is information pollution in media tools, that basic information should be learned from written resources and that the media tools are not consciously used.

Media Tools Used by Turkish Language Teacher Candidates in Their Learning Process: Reasons and Effectiveness

The teacher candidates who participated in the study were asked about the media tools they prefer for their learning process, the reasons for their preferences and whether the media tools are effective. The most emphasised media tools by the participants are the internet, YouTube and Instagram. Other tools mentioned include telephone, television, Twitter, WhatsApp and Facebook. The participants' motivations to use the internet in their learning process are obtaining information and accessing information quickly. The participants who use Youtube stated that they use the media tools for video lessons, activity examples and distance learning. The main reasons for using Instagram for the participants are following up-to-date information, accounts related to their field, sharing course content through Instagram, benefiting from the learning environment Instagram provides and saving time. While the participants stated that they prefer mobile phones during their own learning process as the phones are easy to carry, provides access to information at any time, and saves users' time; they stated that they prefer television as it is easily accessible and enables them to follow useful TV programs. Among the social media platforms, Twitter is being preferred to follow up on recent developments and obtain information; WhatsApp is being used for group learning and because it is easily accessible; and Facebook is being preferred because it enables users to share information.

One of the most striking reasons for the teacher candidates to use the media tools in the learning process is that the media tools provide quick access to information. Other prominent reasons for using the media tools are completing knowledge deficiencies, easy access to up-to-date information, supporting multi-faceted learning, offering different options and being an alternative to the teacher. Examples of the participants' opinions in choosing to use social media tools in their learning processes and why they used them are as follows:

"I use YouTube often in my learning process. I can watch any course content I am curious about... YouTube is efficient at this point" (T2).

"The tools I use are Instagram, Facebook, Twitter, mobile phone, internet. I can reach the contents quickly through them. They present people's different points of view. They are easily reachable" (T9).

"I use Instagram, especially nowadays. Because, I can obtain the information I want thanks to it. There are competent people sharing lecture videos on YouTube. We are able to access them" (T16).

Permanence Learning Through the Media According to Turkish Language Teacher Candidates

The participant teacher candidates in the study were asked what they think about the durability of the learning that takes place through the media. Half of the participants stated that learning through the media is permanent, nearly half of them stated that it is partially permanent, and some of them stated that it is not permanent.

Participants who think that learning through media is permanently stated that the media appeals to different sensory organs, support information with visuals and links it with real life, offers access to information from different sources, and supports the learning-teaching process.

Participant T18, arguing that information in media tools supports him in different aspects, stated, *"Yes, I constantly encounter the information I learn. When I open a page, I see the relevant information and images. There are materials to support obtaining knowledge in different ways. This facilitates permanent learning"* (T18).

Participants who think that learning through media is partially permanent emphasised that the use of media changes depending on individual needs. They also asserted that learning through media is not as effective as face-to-face learning, that information is received without question through media, and that learning through media is temporary, and that it is not based on practising in real life.

Participant T2 said, *"I do not think learning through media is as permanent as face-to-face learning. The ambience where pupils receive knowledge from their teachers, where they have eye contact and communicate with them, is special,"* emphasising the importance of face-to-face education and pointing out that learning through face-to-face education is more permanent than education through the media tools.

The participants who stated that learning through media is not permanent asserted that effective and permanent learning is not realised, that the media tools are a one-way information source, that information cannot be intervened and that learners are passive in the learning process.

T17 stated why learning through media tools is not permanent as follows: *"I do not think that the knowledge obtained through media is permanent. As media tools provide knowledge so easily, it is easily forgotten."* (T17).

The Turkish Teacher Candidates' Views Regarding Using Media Tools in the Learning-Teaching Process in Their Professional Lives

Nearly all of the teacher candidates participating in the study expressed that they would use media tools in the learning-teaching process in their professional lives. Participants who prefer not to use the media tools stated that they did not find them useful; the media tools hinder creative thinking; they did not see themselves competent enough in this regard. The participants' reasons to utilise media tools in the learning-teaching process stem from a professional necessity, obligation, student benefit, and learning environment.

Participants who think that using media tools necessary in the learning-teaching process emphasised that these tools

support teachers in the subjects at which they are insufficient. Moreover, they stated that the media tools are necessary for professional development, that they are beneficial when used correctly, and allow them to see exemplary applications. When the opinions of the participants who consider utilising these tools as an obligation are examined, it is seen that the most crucial reason they present is following the modern standards. Moreover, the participants stated that the media tools are necessary for the education system and lectures, that the integration of technology into education is needed, and the learning tools must be up-to-date. In terms of the media tools' contribution to students, the participants stated that the media tools are necessary for student development, they offer different learning environments for the student, reinforce learning, respond to student interests and needs, and that students enjoy learning through the media. The arguments favouring the necessity of media tools in terms of the learning environment are as follows: the media makes lessons more fun, enriches the education process, appeals to more than one sensory organ and different learning styles, and ensures knowledge diversity.

Participant T6 expressed the necessity of media tools' utilisation in professional with the following statement: *"We definitely need to use them in the teaching-learning process. It would not be possible not to use it in the 21st century.... Since these tools are constantly developed, teachers should use them"*. T8, who stated that he would use social media tools, justified this choice with the following statement: *"It makes accessing information easier. It serves this purpose."* On the other hand, T9 focusing on the benefit of students, stated, *"If there is information that I find really useful for students, I will pass it on to the students. However, I do not always use the media as a teaching tool... Technology has limits in individual improvement."* The remarks of T20, who stated that s/he would use media tools to enhance the learning process of students, are as follows: *"I plan to use media tools in my professional life. I can use media tools as an alternative to reinforcing students' learning process."*

The Views of Turkish Teacher Candidates about Guiding Their Students to Learn through the Media in the Learning-Teaching Process

Nearly all of the teacher candidates participating in the study stated that they would advise their students to learn through the media in the learning-teaching process. Two of the participants stated that they would only partially direct students to use media tools under the control of the teacher or family, considering the possibility of harm to the student, while one participant stated that media tools are not reliable sources and therefore preferred written sources.

Participants stated that they would advise their students to use the internet for online lessons and research; YouTube for watching videos to reinforce the lesson through alternative learning ways; television as it is controlled and contains useful programs; and phone as it is widely used. The reasons of the participants for advising students to use the mentioned media tools are as follows: media tools are a source of information; they enable students to benefit from the recent

innovations of the age; they allow everyone to access information simultaneously; they ensure permanence in learning; students aspire to learn through different tools.

The teacher candidates stated that they would advise their students to use media tools in the learning process to support education when needed, to use them in out-of-school tasks and to diversify resources. In this process, the measures they consider are teaching the correct use of media tools, demanding family control, leading students to reliable information resources and limiting the use of the media tools.

At this point, T7 emphasised the importance of responsible use by saying, *“If students are responsible and I am sure that they will use media tools in a positive manner, I encourage them to use these tools...”*

T9 stated that students should utilise the media to keep up with the modern age requirements: *“I wish my students to use technology. I would like them to use new social media tools as well. Our age is an age of technology. If people grow up deprived of the resources of the present age, this may cause regression.”*

Participant T11 stated that s/he would suggest students learn through media tools, provided that the students are taught of the correct use: *“If I am using them, I should encourage students to use them too. I would recommend them to use television, the internet and the telephone. But students must be taught the correct use of these tools.”*

The Analogies Made by Turkish Teacher Candidates about Media as a Learning Tool

The participant teachers in the study were asked to make analogies about “media as a learning tool”. The analogies made by the participants were handled with the focus on analogy direction.

According to the teacher candidates’ opinions, the media as a learning tool is like a confused teacher who leads you to the correct information only when you ask the right question and riddle and river in terms of leading to the correct information when you follow the clues correctly. Media tools were described as a mixer and bee as they offer different information in one pot, a threshing field in the sense that they provide all necessary and unnecessary information, a bridge and car in terms of delivering information quickly and easily, a water network in terms of delivering information to every household, the Post, Telephone and Telegraph Services (PTT) in terms of providing information exchange, a teacher as they provide information and conduct teaching, an encyclopedia as a source of information, a spider web in that it manages information centrally. Besides, the participants described the media as candles and atoms. The analogy of candle assumes that the candle lightens our way in the dark but causes disaster if left uncontrolled. In the analogy of the atom, it was stated that media tools, like atoms, are useful when used correctly but would cause massive harm if used in the wrong way. Examples of the participants’ views are as follows:

“I see the media as a riddle. There are different paths and signs. If you follow them correctly, you will solve the riddle” (T3).

“Media is a river. When you are caught in the flow of that river, you will reach the ocean of information if you are sure of your destination” (T9).

“I would describe it as a car. Cars make people move from one point to another. Media does the same by carrying people to a level of knowledge” (T11).

“Let us consider the media a candle. It illuminates us in the dark, but if we do not contain its flames, it may cause a big fire. When uncontrolled, it can ruin everything” (T6).

“The media tools are similar to an atom. When an atom is split, it can be used both in useful as well as harmful ways” (T16).

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

The results obtained in the study have shown that the media perceptions of Turkish language teacher candidates are focused on social media. The participants have assumed the media as tools that conduct mass communication, deliver quick information, and inform users about the developments. It was deduced that these features were expressed referring to social media tools. As emphasised by Kane et al. (2009) in their study, social media has different functions such as building relationships, mobilising people, creating information and integration, and filtering the information. Similar media functions were also mentioned in the definitions made by the teacher candidates.

Media-focused views of the teacher candidates participating in the study assumed YouTube and the internet in the first ranks as learning tools. The media tools provide information as a learning tool, serve as a source for learning, provide shortcut information and act as a teacher according to the participants. In Aydın’s (2016) study, the participants expressed that they used social networks to obtain new information and conduct research. In Mngwengwe and Dlamini’s (2020) study social media tools could be used to support scholarly knowledge among students in tertiary institutions in diverse ways. Regarding the function of the media, the three studies’ results support each other. At this point, it is crucial to question the accuracy of information gained through the use of media as a learning tool, to assess it critically, and to select the appropriate information. Individuals that interact with media tools should have basic literacy skills, as illustrated by this importance. Individuals who have accomplished fundamental literacy abilities will accelerate their progress toward media literacy.

The study results have shown that the participants emphasise the media’s aspects as a learning tool that facilitates education, offers alternative ways to the teacher, reduces the teacher’s workload, and contributes to education by creating a basis for effective-permanent learning. Similar points have been emphasised in studies focusing on the use of media tools in educational contexts. Öztürk and Talas (2015) argued that using social software in educational contexts will provide more effective communication between teacher and student. Chen and Bryer (2012) also stress that social media and network technologies have a crucial role in recreating the education environment between students and teachers.

These results necessitate the correct and functional use of media tools in educational environments, in short, the acquisition of new literacy skills brought by the age by both the teacher and the student.

The study results have shown that Turkish teacher candidates find media tools useful as a learning tool. In Görü Doğan's (2015) study, in which similar results were reached, all of the teachers participating in the study stated that utilisation of social media contributed to the learning process. Robinson and Robinson (2021) also addressed this issue in their study. These results show that the media, including social media tools, can be employed in educational contexts. The use of media tools in educational settings necessitates proficiency in media literacy abilities. According to Karaduman (2019), media literacy is a notion that must be addressed from a variety of perspectives, including education, family, awareness, and culture. New media experiences are also a guidance in terms of raising individuals who are critical, with high-awareness, and suitable for the requirements of the digital age.

The reasons for the usability of media tools as a learning tool are as follows: They offer alternative ways to students, prevent monotony in education, activates students, create an efficient educational environment, provide permanent learning, facilitates access to information, save time and economy, are a necessity of the modern age and easily accessible. Dealing with the social media tools' reflections on educational environments, Yamamoto et al. (2010) mentioned in their studies that utilisation of social media tools provides more motivation to become independent from time and place, to conduct research, and to increase knowledge and competencies. These results support the results of this study.

Among the participants, some emphasised that media tools can be used partially since they are not sufficient alone as a learning tool; they can not replace the instructor; they are used for immoral purposes; the information is taken without question; they make people lazy. In their study, Devi et al. (2019) scrutinised the effects of social media on students from a different aspect, emphasising that social media may cause frequent fluctuations in students' moods, and generate stress, fear, anxiety ending up with failure to fulfil their responsibilities and inability to communicate face-to-face. These findings and the conclusion reached in this research are important in focusing on the adverse effects of media and social media tools on students, even though they are useful in educational environments. The inability to use media tools correctly, not knowing how to use them, receiving information from the media without adopting a critical approach, in short, not being consciously literate, are the fundamental causes of these possible problems.

The study results have shown that the media tools that Turkish teacher candidates mostly use in their learning processes are the internet, YouTube and Instagram. Other tools included telephone, television, Twitter, WhatsApp and Facebook. In their study on the use of social media tools, Otrar and Argın (2014) argued that the vast majority of middle school and high school students actively use Facebook, Twitter and YouTube as social media tools. Togay et al.

(2013) argued that YouTube, followed by Facebook, was the social media tool frequently used for educational purposes. These findings confirm that YouTube, followed by other social software, is the most utilised media tool for educational purposes. The findings of the research and related studies in the literature show that social media is widely used in the learning process. The correct use of social media tools in this process also advances in parallel with media literacy. As a matter of fact, Güney (2018) concluded that the media literacy levels of teacher candidates improve as the duration of social media use increases. In addition, the findings obtained within the scope of this very study show that teacher candidates' attitudes towards social media are partially positive.

The research findings displayed that the participants' reasons to use the internet in their learning process were obtaining and accessing information quickly. Similarly, Karaman (2010) also pointed out that teacher candidates use the internet to access information. In this study, the participants who mostly use YouTube in their own learning process stated that they use YouTube for video lessons, activity examples and distance learning. While teachers use YouTube for educational purposes as cited by Akkaya and Kanadlı (2019), Togay et al. (2013) argued that students also utilise YouTube in their learning process. These findings suggest that individuals widely use the internet and YouTube for educational purposes. Focusing on the relationship between internet use and media literacy, Çakmak (2019) found that teacher candidates' media literacy levels vary according to the time they use the internet.

The findings of the study have displayed that, among the social media tools, Instagram is being used by individuals for following up-to-date information, sharing course content, creating a learning environment and saving time and since it is easily accessible; Twitter for looking at the recent developments and obtaining information; and WhatsApp due to its easy accessibility and providing a group learning environment. In a study by Al-Qaysi et al. (2020), WhatsApp was found the most predominant application used for educational purposes. Arguing that WhatsApp provides particular advantages in the learning process, Gon and Rawekar (2017) and Mngwengwe and Dlamini (2020) emphasised its easy accessibility enabling individuals to learn anywhere and anytime.

Another finding of the study is that Turkish teacher candidates use media tools in their learning process to reach a vast amount of information quickly. In addition, complementing learning deficiencies, supporting multi-faceted learning, and benefiting from different alternatives are other striking reasons the teacher candidate participants put forward. In Kamble et al.'s (2021) study, participants use social media to learn new things. Akkaya and Kanadlı (2019) also argued that individuals who use media tools for educational purposes utilise social media to access information quickly. The findings of Togay et al. (2013) show that university students think that social media helps their learning and find it easy to use, helpful and necessary for their educational developments. These findings reveal how crucial the opportunities offered by media tools in accessing information quickly are.

It is critical to use the media as a conscious literate at this point. According to Karaduman (2019), multimedia content requires new abilities and literacy skills. According to the research, users' active, participative, and productive identities in the new media environment provide a significant opportunity for new media literacy.

The opinions of the participants regarding the permanence of learning through media tools have also varied. The knowledge gained through media tools is thought to provide permanent learning because the media tools appeal to different sensory organs, support information with visuals, are related to real life, and support the learning-teaching process. It appeared that these opinions are focused on supporting information from different angles stimulating the mind. On the other hand, findings indicating that learning through media is partially permanent have also been obtained. Participants' responses cited individual need as an essential factor. In addition, it was emphasised that learning through media tools is not as permanent as one-to-one learning, information is received without questioning, and learning is instantaneous without real-life practice. The participants who favour that learning through media is partially permanent stated that the media is a one-way source of information, that the information process cannot be intervened, and that students are passive learners during this process. These findings suggest that permanent learning will occur only when the media tools are used timely, in the right place and appropriate learning environment.

The study's findings showed that the participant teacher candidates plan using media tools in their professional lives. It is thought that the tools they will use include primarily social media, departing from the teacher candidates' perceptions of media as a learning tool. However, Manca and Ranieri (2016) argued the opposite. Their study found that the academicians participating in their study tended to use social media for personal and professional purposes rather than teaching practices. This finding raises suspicion regarding the possibility for the teacher candidates to realise their plans to employ media tools in the educational environment.

This study detected that utilising media tools in the educational process is considered a necessity by teacher candidates. Participants stated that these tools would support teachers when they are insufficient and are necessary for professional development. In their studies, Akkaya and Kanadlı (2019) and Sarsar et al. (2015) emphasised that social media tools would contribute to teachers' professional careers. These findings prove the importance of media tools regarding their contribution to professional development.

It was stressed that media tools in the learning-teaching process are a necessity of the modern age. Moreover, it has been put forward that there is a need to integrate technology into education, that media tools offer different learning environments for students, reinforce learning, respond to student interests and needs, enrich the teaching process, appeal to more than one sensory organ and different learning styles. As Pollara and Zhu (2011) argued, social software supports the educational process by enriching it with materials in the form of text, video, and sound, and it also supports the teacher in the teaching process and evaluation.

The study determined that Turkish teacher candidates would encourage their students to use media tools in the learning process. These media tools include the internet, YouTube, television, and telephone. Teacher candidates want students to use these tools because these tools are a source of information, benefit from the innovations brought by the age, everyone can access information at the same time thanks to these tools, and encourage students to learn through different sources. Yamamoto et al. (2010) emphasised individualisation of learning and the possibility to repeat lessons by the student as benefits of using social media tools in education. These findings prove that media tools are an indispensable part of the educational process for various reasons. Students' media literacy is linked to their ability to effectively use media resources in educational settings. Media literate people, according to Bachmair and Bazalgette (2007), are people who can efficiently use media tools and apps, access and generate information in media, and actively use media to communicate and benefit from it.

The findings obtained from the participants' descriptions of "media as a learning tool" show that the participants focused on both the beneficial and harmful aspects of the media. The participants stated that there is too much information in media tools, and success cannot be achieved if the correct path is not followed. Although media tools have their disadvantages, they are a part of life and learning as well. It is seen that media tools that provide limitless information to people will bring significant success if used correctly, but will cause severe damages if misused.

When the study's findings are examined, it is understood that the Turkish teacher candidates, who are the architects of the future, see social media as learning resources and use them in their own education and will use them in their professional lives in the future. The teacher candidates think that media tools, when used correctly, will enrich the learning-teaching process, and they are aware that they will provide benefits to teachers and students in various aspects. However, it is seen that social media tools are at the centre of all these views. The effect of social media, whose use is becoming widespread by the masses, is evident and will also inevitably affect education systems. The replacement of printed, visual, and audio media by social media tools depends on successful incorporation of them to the social media. It would be appropriate to say that the integration of media tools, more specifically media tools, into education should be carried out in accordance with the needs of education systems, not through mass use habits.

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