

## TECHNOLOGY LITERACY IN THE SCOPE OF LIFELONG LEARNING

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### Abstract

Developments in information and technology have led to a constant change in information. In order to adapt to these changes, individuals need to develop and renew themselves throughout life. Individuals can increase their knowledge by adapting to the changes. Lifelong learning requires active and continuous use of knowledge. Persistent learners are those who can access the information they need to solve problems, adapt their knowledge, and add new information. For this reason, technology literacy, which is a requirement for the ability to access and use information through technology, has become a necessity for lifelong learning. In this context, technology usage skills and technology literacy levels of individuals are important. In order for lifelong learning to be sustainable, individuals need to use technology effectively and know how to access the right information. The aim of this research is to examine the necessity and importance of technology literacy within the scope of lifelong learning. The findings obtained by examining the literature in line with the keywords determined in the research carried out with the document analysis technique are presented. As a result of the research, technology literacy is important in order to reach the information transferred to digital platforms, especially due to the pandemic.

**Keywords:** Lifelong learning, technology literacy, technology, education

### INTRODUCTION

Today, education and training needs of people have increased due to rapid transformations and changes in economic, political, technological, cultural and social fields. Individuals need certain qualifications in order to maintain their competitiveness in changing market conditions and maintain their material position as they exist, and they need renewal and development in order to maintain these qualities. These changes that continue

throughout the life of individuals and the needs that become more important over time cause the phenomenon of lifelong learning to occur and become important.

Lifelong learning can be defined as an attitude and discipline that extends beyond both vocational and job-oriented education and encompasses social skills such as interpersonal communication, teamwork, emotional intelligence and problem solving. Thus, lifelong learning focuses mainly on maintaining self-controlled longevity in a person's professional life. In this respect, lifelong learning means that learners are in constant contact with new knowledge, skills and competencies, and that they provide new structures by establishing a relationship between existing knowledge and skills and newly learned ones (Şişman, 2012). In other words, lifelong learning is a kind of habit and behavior (Koç, 2011).

Technology literacy gains importance in this context. Although education is a process, technology literacy is a long process, not a one-time achievement. Increasing the capacity of individuals about technology literacy and all the information obtained constitute a broad educational process (Davies, 2011).

In 2020, with the Covid-19 virus epidemic, known as the corona virus worldwide, there have been changes in many areas both in our country and all over the world. Especially in our country, extensive distance education applications, online trainings and seminars, teleconferences made using different technological communication tools have actually been one of the most striking manifestations of the mentioned change and transformation. Changing and developing world conditions in today's world lead to many changes and transformations in the dimensions of education and training. These changes and transformations can be educational, technological or intellectual.

Some skills are needed in order for individuals to adapt to changes and transformations and to respond appropriately, to follow the developing technologies, to access the information needed and to use this information in daily life, and to transform the information into a product (Anagün, Atalay, Kılıç ve Yaşar, 2016). In this research, it is aimed to examine the necessity and importance of technology literacy within the scope of lifelong learning.

### **Lifelong Learning**

Since lifelong learning is the renewal of knowledge, skills and competencies in the process of living, it covers the process that includes many non-formal education processes as well as the formal education process that continues from the basic education period to the end of higher education.

In lifelong learning, it is assumed that it cannot be limited in terms of place and time, and that learning will occur when there is a desire to learn (Coşkun & Demirel, 2012). In this context, it is emphasized that lifelong learning is based on three basic principles.

- The first of these elements is continuity: education starts from the prenatal period and continues until the end of life, and during this period it is acquiring qualifications according to individual interests and needs.
- The second one is creativity: individuals realize their own potential and develop their new product creation skills.
- Third learning: one of the important points of lifelong learning is that the individual learns spontaneously and with the help of questions (Teyfur, 2009; Karakuş, 2013; Koç, 2011).

With the developments in information and technology, information is in a constant change. In order to adapt to these changes, individuals need to develop and renew themselves throughout life. Adapting to the changes experienced allows the individual to increase his knowledge. Learning is a process that is needed in human nature from the very beginning to the very end. The existence of the need for learning throughout life has revealed the concept of lifelong learning (Coşkun & Demirel, 2012).

### **Technology Literacy**

Based on the diversity of knowledge and ways of learning, different literacy concepts have emerged. Some of those; information literacy, computer literacy, digital literacy and technology literacy. Technology literacy encompasses the ability to use the internet not only for information seeking, but also for all actions of individuals, from shopping to voting (Apak, 2008). Digital literacy has created a full awareness of finding what the individual is looking for on the internet. In addition, the concept of technology literacy includes the concepts of information literacy, digital literacy and computer literacy (Pekman, 2006). Hansen (2003) elaborated a little more on the characteristics of a technology literate individual. According to this:

1. Technology can learn to perceive themselves as capable, to achieve certain goals and to expand their influence in the world, even when faced with unknown and uncertain situations,

2. Willing to spend time and effort managing decisions, finding solutions, and taking the risks necessary to consider different options.
3. To research, evaluate and implement technology solutions and to have the knowledge and skills to find the right solution and to identify the gap between what is known and what needs to be known.
4. Gain the knowledge and skills to use technology to achieve personal success and create positive change in the world and in shared goals.
5. It has been stated that how and why technology is used, how technology is associated with its environment, and the technological strategies used to achieve the goal can be considered.

There are three levels recommended for understanding technological literacy: (1) awareness, (2) praxis (i.e. education), and (3) phronesis (i.e. practical competence and practical wisdom). These levels are most accurately represented as a continuum that includes a continuous cycle of retraining.

If an individual is technology literate, he or she has technology knowledge and can make the right decisions by thinking objectively and critically about technological problems, with the ability to use this knowledge effectively. Technology literacy should be expressed as more than just knowledge of computers and computer applications (Loveland & Love, 2016).

### Conclusion and Recommendations

The development of information and communication technologies has made information an economic and social power today. The level of development of a country is evaluated by the quantity and quality of the information it produces and shares. Such a well-informed society requires a high degree of skill in most areas. In a knowledge-based society, people need to be independent, proactive and involved in lifelong learning. Due to the speed of change, the knowledge and skills acquired in a short time are insufficient or invalid. In this way, individuals living in the information society will continue to learn throughout their lives by gaining learning skills.

Nowadays, it is essential for individuals to adopt lifelong learning in order to sustain their personal and professional development. In this context, the necessity of following the developments in their fields, accessing and adapting information comes to the fore. The recommendations made for the research are as follows;

- In order for lifelong learning to become a way of life, it should be supported by the education system and awareness of its importance for career success should be increased.
- In terms of the level of technological development, it is necessary to develop technological competence standards suitable for this level of development from the pre-school period and to carry out necessary studies on this subject.

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