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**ÖĞRENCİLERİNİN YAŞAM BOYU ÖĞRENME HAKKINDAKİ TUTUMLARININ  
DEĞERLENDİRİLMESİ**  
**EVALUATION OF ATTITUDES OF THE STUDENTS TOWARDS LIFELONG LEARNING**

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**Abstract**

This research's purpose is to determine the students' attitudes towards Lifelong Learning. In the study, 'General Screening Model' which is one of the descriptive methods was used. The sample of the research constitutes 814 students studying in Adana Vocational School at Çukurova University in 2015-2016 school year. According to the results obtained from the research, it was determined that the students express themselves better in their mother tongue and do not always look positively and constructively at developing societies. Furthermore, such results have been reached in the research that there is no a statistically significant difference of opinion between the students in the 1<sup>st</sup> grade and in the 2<sup>nd</sup> grade depending on the variable of class level.

**Keywords:** Lifelong Learning, Attitude, Professional Development, Vocational School

**1. INTRUCTION**

Lifelong learning (LLL) is defined as all learning activities undertaken throughout life with the aim of the development of knowledge, skills and competences from the perspective of personal and social employment (Schild, 2002; Borat, 2010). LLL is a concept which aims individuals' self-improvement and self-renewal. According to Erdamar (2011: 220), LLL means self-recognition and recognition of the world, and acquirement of new knowledge and skill, and investment in oneself, and creating something, and realization of new beauties of the world, and learning habit and a behaviour pattern. According to Çelik, Güleç and Demirhan (2012: 40), LLL includes all kinds of learning activities undertaken throughout life in order to develop knowledge and skills within personal, civic and social perspectives. To Sarıgöz (2015), developments in the fields of science and technology, increase in communication opportunities, diversification of educational environments, diversification of teachers' professional competencies result in worldwide acceptance of the concept of LLL in a short time. OECD (Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development) describes LLL as activities endless and needed to develop constantly, and that has an important role in an individual's improvement and change (Ersoy, 2009: 9). LLL is the development of competence based on voluntariness due to personal and professional reasons (Ireland Ministry of Education and Science, 2000).

The concept of LLL was used by John Dewey, Eduard Lindeman and Basil Yeaxle at first in 1920s (Ayhan, 2005: 10). Afterwards, the concept of LLL has started to be strongly emphasized and used in the mid-1990s, and has been expressed as 'learning from the cradle to the grave' (Gündoğan, 2003; Hürsen, 2011; Toprak and Erdoğan, 2012; EC, 2003; Özkartal, 2015). An individual who is a lifelong learner should possess certain skills which are to know how to manage his/her own learning, and how to motivate himself/herself, and how to adjust himself/herself to the changing world, and to have a wide strategy repertoire for effective learning and communicating with individuals, and to apply the knowledge gained, and to improve memory, and retrospective correction and enhancement (Teyfur, 2009: 373). According to Polat and Odabaş (2008: 596), lifelong learners are individuals who can reach the information they need, and assimilate obtained knowledge into their personality structure, and put new knowledge on it in the solution of a problem requiring the use of active and continuous knowledge.

LLL includes formal learning in schools, and non-formal learning, and courses providing technical training and the acquirement of technical skills, learning leading to the acquirement of professional skills gained at work, and other skills (Çelik, Güleç and Demirhan, 2012: 40). In the report published by UNESCO

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in 1972, it is emphasized that LLL is a right for all individuals, and equal resources should be allocated to formal education and non-formal education, and it should be involved in activities that would include people of all ages. Moreover, in the report, it is emphasized that LLL as a concept should provide equal opportunity in education, and that borders should be removed in order to ensure educational opportunities for individuals with limited financial means (Kaya, 2010: 32; Torres, 2001; DPT, 2001).

Lifelong learning appealing to all age groups in the society has three basic elements in itself. These elements are continuity, creativity, and learning. *Continuity*: educational process starts at the first years of life and continues until death and is individuals' gaining qualifications for their interest and needs throughout all their lives. The changes in individuals' educational futures and changes in their personalities are formed by the education in their youth. During this process, individuals should put their creativity on the learning process and sustain lifelong learning activities. *Creativity*: the main objective of lifelong learning is to make individuals a part of life. Creativity is that individuals realize their own potentials and develop their creativity in order to adjust themselves to the changes. Also, it is to unlock individuals' creative potentials against successful individuals in traditional schools. *Learning*: one of the most important elements of lifelong learning which is individuals' learning on their own by asking questions. Schools must bear their responsibility to gain skills (determining the problems, making decisions, solving problems etc.), values and attitudes necessary for lifelong learning (Uzunboylu and Hürsen, 2011: 127; Özkartal, 2014; Erdamar, 2011: 223-224).

## 2. METHOD

### 2.1. Problem Sentence

At what level are the attitudes of students studying at the vocational schools towards Lifelong Learning approach?

### 2.2. The Objective of the Research

The objective of this research is to determine the attitudes of the students studying at the vocational schools about LLL by considering the demographic variables of class level, and type of program. In the research, benefitting from the students' views and thoughts, various recommendations regarding LLL have also tried to be brought forward.

### 2.3. The Population and the Sample

The population of the research constitutes all students studying in the programs at Çukurova University, and the sample of this research constitutes 814 students studying in the programs of Computer Programming (CP), and of Child Development (CD), and of Accounting and Tax Applications (ATA), and of Fashion Design (FD), Radio and Television Programming (RTP), and of Interior Design (ID), and of Construction Technician (CT) in Adana Vocational School at Çukurova University.

### 2.4. The Research Model

*Lifelong Learning Attitude Scale* developed by Hürsen (2011) was used in this research. The answers of the students participating in the research to the scale items depending on the demographic variables were calculated by using Anova test which is an F test, t-test and one-way variance analysis with the help of SPSS 20 statistical software package. In the research, t-test was used for binary variables, and Anova test was used when the study involves 3 or more variables. Allier questions in the scale that was used in the research are graded from positive (5) to negative (1), and from negative (1) to positive (5). When the data was interpreted, significance level of ( $p < 0,05$ ) was used, and research data was interpreted according to this. Validity and reliability studies of the Lifelong Learning Attitude Scale used in the research were re-conducted and Cronbach's Alpha internal reliability coefficient of 25-item survey was calculated as 0,902. The scale used in the research consists of five point likert type 25 items including (1) Strongly Disagree (2) Disagree, (3) Undecided, (4) Agree, and (5) Strongly Agree. Overall assessments of the scale used in the research were determined as below (Sarigöz and Özkara, 2015; Sarigöz, Cengiz and Özkara, 2015; Sarigöz, et, al., 2015):

$$RO = \frac{HV - LV}{NO} = \frac{5 - 1}{5} = 0,8$$

RO: Range of Options  
HV: The Highest Value

LV: The Lowest Value  
NO: Number of Options

1.00 - 1,80: Strongly Disagree

1.81 - 2,60: Disagree

2.61 - 3,40: Undecided

3.41 - 4,20: Agree

4.21 - 5,00: Strongly Agree

In the research, 'General Screening Model', one of the descriptive methods was used. General screening model is the screening arrangements carried out on a group, sample group or a paradigm or the entire universe in order to draw conclusion about the universe composed of numerous elements (Karasar, 2005: 79). General screening model is a research model used to specify the types of information such as people's attitudes, beliefs, values, habits and opinions (McMillan and Schumacher, 2001).

### 3. FINDINGS

In this part of the research, findings and interpretations based on the students' views about LLL are presented. In accordance with the purpose of the research, the Lifelong Learning Attitude Scale was applied to the students, and the answers of the students to the scale were tabulated and interpreted.

Table 1: t-test analysis results of the answers of the vocational school students to the Lifelong Learning Attitude Scale (LLAS) according to gender variable

Gender	N	$\bar{X}$	Ss	Sd	t	p
1.Female	419	103,158	13,947	812	2,207	,028
2.Male	395	101,101	12,549			

p<0,05

When the data in Table 1 was examined, from the answers of the students studying at the vocational school and participating in the research to the Lifelong Learning Attitude Scale, it was determined that there is a statistically significant difference (p<,05) between the female and male students in favour of the female students. In the light of the data obtained from the research, it can be said that the female students have higher lifelong learning tendency than the male students.

Table 2: t-test analysis results of the answers of the vocational school students to the Lifelong Learning Attitude Scale (LLAS) according to class level variable

Class Level	N	$\bar{X}$	Ss	Sd	t	p
1 <sup>st</sup> Grade	411	102,891	12,292	812	1,582	,114
2 <sup>nd</sup> Grade	403	101,414	14,266			

p>0,05

When the data in Table 2 was examined, from the answers of the students studying at the vocational school and participating in the research to the Lifelong Learning Attitude Scale, it was determined that there is no a statistically significant difference (p>,05) between the students in the first grade and in the second grade in terms of their attitudes about LLL according to class level variable. In the light of the research data, it can be said that the students in the first grade and in the second grade have similar attitudes about LLL.

Table 3: Anova test analysis results of the answers of the vocational school students to the Lifelong Learning Attitude Scale (LLAS) according to the variable of the type of program

Type of Program	N	$\bar{X}$	Ss	Variance Source	Sum of Squares	Sd	Mean Square	F	p	Significant Difference (Tukey)
1)CP	232	103,67	13,28	Wit. Gr.	3005,82	6	500,97	2,863	,009	
2)CD	117	102,78	15,33	Btw. Gr.	141205,42	807	174,976			
3)ATA	155	100,57	14,24	Total	144211,24	813				7-4
4)FD	76	99,32	12,51							7-5
5)RTP	73	99,10	13,40							
6)ID	80	102,41	8,87							
7)CT	81	105,17	11,79							
Total	814	102,16	13,32							

p<0,05

When the data in Table 3 was examined, from the answers of the students participating in the research and studying in the programs in Adana Vocational School to the Lifelong Learning Attitude Scale, it was determined that there is a statistically significant difference between the students studying in the programs of Construction Technician (CT), and of Fashion Design (FD), and of Radio and Television Programming (RTP) in favour of the students studying in the program of Construction Technician (CT) according to the type of program variable [F(2,863), p(,009); p<,05].

Table 4: Arithmetic averages and skill levels of the answers of the students who participated in the research to the Lifelong Learning Attitude Scale (LLAS)

LIFELONG LEARNING ATTITUDE SCALE ITEMS	$\bar{X}$	Skill Level
3. I am better at public speaking in my native language.	4,44	Strongly Agree

4. I deeply comprehend subjects explained or I read in my native language.	4,38	Strongly Agree
12. I can obtain knowledge individually or co-operatively in a group.	4,27	Strongly Agree
5. I reasonably perceive the events I witness.	4,24	Strongly Agree
7. I store my knowledge as table, graph, and model and stylistically in my mind.	4,21	Strongly Agree
8. In my opinion, confidentiality is not necessary for communication.	4,20	Agree
19. I do not play it safe to achieve the goal.	4,18	Agree
13. I do not meet all challenges in order to obtain knowledge or to access information.	4,17	Agree
20. I always use the opportunity that comes.	4,16	Agree
16. I actively participate in intercultural activities and I am entrusted with a task.	4,15	Agree
6. I always reach the conclusion based upon evidences.	4,14	Agree
9. The internet is the most important technological device to obtain information.	4,13	Agree
14. I use the knowledge I have gained in everywhere when needed.	4,12	Agree
21. I do not attach importance to self-control.	4,06	Agree
2. I express myself better in my native language.	4,06	Agree
11. I am so insistent on accessing and gaining information.	4,05	Agree
15. I always actively participate in social environments and I am entrusted with a task.	4,04	Agree
18. I do not always put my ideas into practice.	4,03	Agree
24. Cultural activities should not be defined by artistic activities.	4,02	Agree
25. Feelings should be described or expressed in words creatively.	3,99	Agree
10. The internet is the most effective way to share and disseminate information.	3,93	Agree
22. Music, literature, visual and performing arts are the parts of mass media.	3,91	Agree
1. I communicate more effectively in my native language.	3,88	Agree
17. I have constructive approach to changing societies and cultures.	3,74	Undecided
23. Experiences and feelings should be expressed through cultural activities.	3,70	Undecided

*General Arithmetic Average: 4,086 (Agree)*

From the arithmetic averages of the students' answers to the Lifelong Learning Attitude Scale (LLLAS) in Table 4, it was determined that article 3 stating '*I am better at public speaking in my native language*' ( $\bar{X}=4,44$ ), and article 4 stating '*I deeply comprehend subjects explained or I read in my native language*' ( $\bar{X}=4,38$ ) are the items with the highest arithmetic averages in the scale. In the light of the answers given to the scale items, it can be said that the students express their own feelings and thoughts better in their native language, and better understand the statements in their native language available in both media and verbal communication.

Moreover, from the arithmetic averages of the students' answers to the items of the Lifelong Learning Attitude Scale (LLLAS) in Table 4, it was determined that article 23 stating '*Experiences and feelings should be expressed through cultural activities*' ( $\bar{X}=3,70$ ), article 17 stating '*I have constructive approach to changing societies and cultures*' ( $\bar{X}=3,88$ ) are the items with the lowest arithmetic averages in the scale. In the light of the students' answers to the scale items, it can be stated that the students think that experiences and cultures are not just expressed through cultural activities, and that the constructive approach to changing societies and cultures should not be taken at all times.

#### 4. RESULTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

##### 4.1. Results

According to the students studying at the vocational school and participating in the research, a lifelong learner is an individual who has skills and features such as using technology, and following scientific developments closely, and seeking, accessing, acquiring, using and evaluating knowledge and information, and being information literate.

From the answers of the students studying in Adana Vocational School and participating in the research to the Lifelong Learning Attitude Scale, it was concluded that there is no a statistically significant difference between the students in the first grade and in the second grade according to class level variable. Thus, it can be said that the students in the first grade and in the second grade have similar attitudes about lifelong learning depending on *class level* variable.

From the answers of the students studying in Adana Vocational School and participating in the research to the Lifelong Learning Attitude Scale, it was concluded that there is a statistically significant difference between the female and male students in favour of the female students according to *gender* variable. Hence, it can be said that the female students have higher lifelong learning tendency than the male students. In the light of the conversations made with the students in order to pinpoint the reason of this difference, the conclusion was reached that the female students are more willing to gain professional knowledge and put in more effort than the male students.

From the answers of the students studying in Adana Vocational School and participating in the research to the Lifelong Learning Attitude Scale, it was concluded that there is a statistically significant difference between the students studying in the programs of Construction Technician (CT), and of Fashion Design (FD), and of Radio and Television Programming (RTP) in favour of the students studying in the program of Construction Technician (CT) according to *the type of program* variable. Therefore, it can be said that the students studying in the program of Construction Technician have higher lifelong learning tendency than the students studying in other programs.

From the arithmetic averages of the answers of the students studying in Adana Vocational School and participating in the research to the Lifelong Learning Attitude Scale, it was determined that the items with the highest arithmetic averages are *I am better at public speaking in my native language* and *I deeply comprehend subjects explained or I read in my native language*. Hence, in the light of the conversations made with the students and the arithmetic averages of their answers to the scale items, it can be said that the students better understand what is said and what they read in their native language, and communicate better in their native language.

From the arithmetic averages of the answers of the students studying in Adana Vocational School and participating in the research to the Lifelong Learning Attitude Scale, it was determined that the items with the lowest arithmetic averages are *'Experiences and feelings should be expressed through cultural activities'* and *'I have constructive approach to changing societies and cultures'*. Thus, in the light of the conversations made with the students and the arithmetic averages of their answers to the scale items, it can be stated that the students think that cultures are not just expressed through activities, and that changing societies do not always change positively.

In the light of the answers of the students studying in Adana Vocational School and participating in the research to the Lifelong Learning Attitude Scale, it was concluded that the general average of the scale coincides with (Agree), namely, lower than expected (Strongly Agree) in terms of skill level. Therefore, it can be said that the students' attitudes about lifelong learning are just under expected.

#### **4.2. Recommendations**

In order that students have higher lifelong learning tendency, various trainings about the importance of the information and knowledge in modernizing world should be given to them, and the advantages and successes of knowledgeable individuals in the life should be emphasized in these trainings to raise the awareness of the students. In addition, in order to access the information and obtain knowledge, the information literacy, and the importance and effective use of mass media, computer, and internet should be explained to all individuals, and these effective trainings should be given to all individuals at all stages of life beginning from primary education.

In order to achieve the goal of LLL, all libraries should be reviewed and modernized, and it should be given more weight to online-libraries, and scientific publications such as e-book and e-journal should be encouraged. All institutions and organizations should support libraries about this topic. Furthermore, it should be raised the awareness of all academicians, directors and teachers about LLL, and in-service training should be given to all officers who desire to receive training in LLL by various relevant institutions and organizations.

The curricula in schools should be revised according to the criteria of LLL, the curricula which are required to change, should be revised or designed all over again.

Every segment of the society needs LLL, because the world is in the process of continuous renewal and modernization. New knowledge is continuously produced, and especially professional renewals happen, and innovations occur every day, and so the information about LLL and its criteria should be given to all individuals who will go out to work or are working, through seminars, symposia, congresses, conferences, and various courses, and it should be provided that the individuals improve themselves constantly.

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