



EDUCATIONAL NEEDS OF FACULTY MEMBERS REGARDING ICT USE AT THE SCHOOL FOR THE HANDICAPPED

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study is to determine the educational needs of the faculty members of the *School for the Handicapped* (SfH) - the only school in Turkey pursuing vocational higher education to the hearing-impaired students- regarding the use of *Information and Communication Technologies* (ICT). The study was carried out as a qualitative case study. The participants of the study included 3 administrators and 24 faculty members from the SfH. The data were collected through the participant observations by compiling the semi-structured interviews, open-ended questionnaires, researcher's journal, documents and the archival records. The data have been analyzed inductively. The perspectives of both the administrators and the faculty members about the use of ICT revealed important evidence for determining the present case concerning the ICT integration process in the SfH. The data have been discussed in the light of the related research.

Keywords: *ICT integration, Educational needs, Professional development, Faculty member*

1. INTRODUCTION

Regardless of individuals' physical handicaps such as having hearing loss, one of the goals of higher education is to train them having the professional knowledge, skills, attitudes and culture required by the modern society. However, it is still a common fact in Turkey that new technologies are not used at a desirable level in higher education. Although there are several reasons for this, it is quite important that faculty members at universities use these new technologies in their courses and reach related sources when necessary (Cagiltay & Yildirim, 2007). In the process of training qualified individuals at higher education, Anadolu University has an important place with its strategic planning that covers the academic years of 2009–

2013 and with its strategic goal of “increasing the use of ICTs in education” (Anadolu University, 2008). This strategic planning includes both individuals with normally developed and with special educational needs. Although there are students having various handicaps attending different colleges at the university, among the colleges at the university, the SfH has a unique place since it is the only higher education institution in Turkey that gives vocational education to hearing impaired students. The curriculum of the school was developed and implemented concerning the educational needs of the hearing-impaired students through vocational education programs suitable to them and thus helps them take their places in the society as productive individuals.



In order to equip hearing-impaired students with professional knowledge and skills in line with the goals of higher education, ICTs should be used in the teaching-learning process in the SfH. In addition, ICTs are the most important of all the technologies that enrich and facilitate the learning experiences of hearing-impaired students (Carlson, 1996; Lucner, Bowen & Carter, 2001; National Centre for Technology in Education [NCTE], 2008; Roberson, 2001). Therefore, the integration of ICT into the teaching-learning process at the SfH is one of the significant variables that help hearing-impaired individuals use of ICTs effectively and help equip them with the necessary skills related to these technologies.

The integration of ICT can be described as the use of internet-based and computer-based applications in class environment to help establish communication and reach information and thus to support student learning (Van Melle, Cimellaro & Shulha, 2003). Studies conducted in the field of education have revealed that the effective integration of ICT into the learning environment engage students in higher-order thinking (Jonassen, Peck & Wilson, 1999; Kearney & Treagust, 2001). In recent years, a number of developed countries have started to invest on the integration of ICT in schools (Gulbahar, 2007; Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development [OECD], 1999) and educational institutions especially universities are increasingly looking to ICT as a technical aid in the development of new models of teaching and learning (Zandvliet & Straker, 2001). However, the integration of ICT into curriculum and instruction is a long and rather slow process (Roblyer, 2006). The reason is that the integration of ICT is a comprehensive process that should be taken into consideration in various aspects (Akbababa-Altun, 2006; Department for Education and Skills [DfES], 2001). In higher education, this comprehensive integration process primarily includes students, faculty members and the administrators of the institution (Semenov, 2005). In order to increase ICT use at universities, first of all, the faculty members should be willing to use these technologies in their courses and be able to reach sources when necessary (Cagiltay & Yildirim, 2007).

According to Tearle (2004), for an effective ICT integration it is important that an appropriate, flexible, strategic and functional plan should be developed considering all the aspects of ICT integration; enough time should be allocated to determine the needs; the developed plan should be

sent to all the individuals responsible for the integration process; the current and future needs of those who use ICT should be determined; and the needs for cooperation, reflection and examination should be determined to increase the effectiveness of ICT use. In addition, Colins (1990) has stated that ICT integration is not merely the installation of software or hardware in schools, stressing that the integration process should include a number of factors like curriculum for the effective use of technology in education, in-service training, and the infrastructure.

As can be seen, the process of ICT integration is not consisted of only the establishment of the infrastructure for the necessary software and hardware. The process includes many other factors, especially the man-force (Akbaba-Altun, 2006). In order to improve the teaching-learning process, it is essential that both the policy makers and practitioners should know that the administrators and faculty members at universities are the main actors in the integration of ICT. Therefore, studies on the integration process should not ignore these actors.

Faculty members play an important role not only in the integration of ICT but also in the transformation of the whole education system (Semenov, 2005). The decisions, approaches, beliefs and attitudes of faculty members regarding the use of ICT in teaching directly influence the instructional use of computers (Andris, 1995; Chen, 2008; Macarthur & Malouf, 1991; Yaghi, 1996). They also have important role in helping students get accustomed to the new learning environment where ICTs are used (Odabasi, 2000). The reason is that one of the responsibilities of faculty members is teaching. In order to become an effective instructor, faculty members should have various skills like establishing rich learning environments, observing and evaluating students, giving feedback, teaching students in small groups, teaching the course content, guiding students, developing the curriculum and evaluating teaching (Clark, Houston, Kolodner, Branch, Levine, & Kern, 2004). In the teaching-learning process, the use of ICT may help faculty members make good use of these skills. However, faculty members should primarily know how to use ICTs in the teaching-learning process (Odabasi, 2000).

In-service training activities organized in a school are considered to be an important factor that helps faculty members use ICT effectively in the teaching-learning process. The important point in the integration of technology into the teaching-



learning environment is not the technology itself but the competencies of faculty members (Odabasi & Kabakci, 2007). In order to increase the competencies of faculty members, first of all, their educational needs should be determined (Pittas, 2000).

The studies revealed that teachers have positive attitudes towards the use of ICT in the educational environment (Albirini, 2006; Aral, Butun, Unlu, Erdogan & Unal, 2006; Cagiltay, Cakiroglu, Cagiltay & Cakiroglu, 2001; Paraskeva, Bouta & Papagianni, 2008; Torkzadeh, Chang & Demirhan, 2006); however, it was reported that teachers do not consider technology necessary for their teaching activities but use technology to support their traditional applications (Demirarslan and Usluel, 2005); in addition, it was also found out that among the factors limiting the integration of ICT into teachers' own way of teaching are lack of time and lack of related knowledge and training (Andris, 1995; Ertmer, 2001; Goktas, Yildirim ve Yildirim, 2009; Pelgrum, 2001; Yalin, Karadeniz & Sahin, 2007).

Among the studies carried out through qualitative methods in the related literature, there are institutional-case studies which combined various data-collection techniques (Eteokleous, 2008; Lim, 2007; Puga, 2006; Robertson, Grady, Fluck & Webb, 2006). For an effective ICT integration in educational institutions studies should be carried out to investigate the ICT integration process. It was further stated that a successful ICT integration depends on the context and conditions of the educational institution and that for a change or improvement in the system of the school, all the factors brought by each participant into the process should be determined and examined in terms of their interactions with each other (Usluel, Mumcu & Demirarslan, 2007). In addition, case studies investigating the ICT integration process in educational institutions whether it was for hearing-impaired students or for normal-hearing students are comprehensive studies which make it possible to fully understand the ICT integration process of an educational institution by examining all the participants through either interviews or observations, by determining the related needs in detail, and by providing supportive data through document examinations (Bogdan & Biklen, 1998; Tellis, 1997; Yin, 1998).

Studies in the related literature revealed that for an effective integration of ICT into the teaching-learning process, it is necessary to give in-service training to instructors who have key roles in the

school and that the in-service training activities should meet the individual needs of the faculty members (Cope & Ward, 2002; Galanouli, Murphy & Gardner, 2004; Jedeskog & Nissen, 2004). While determining the individual needs regarding the use of ICT in the teaching-learning process, it is necessary to determine what individuals say, desire and do. Therefore, it is necessary to take especially the views of participants like administrators and faculty members who take place in the ICT integration process. This necessity requires more concern in the case of individuals with special needs.

Therefore based on this necessity, the purpose of this study is to determine the educational needs of the faculty members in the SfH regarding the use of ICT in the teaching-learning process through the views of the administrators and of the faculty members. The research questions are as follows:

1. What attempts do the administrators in the SfH carry out in the teaching-learning process for the faculty members to use ICT?
2. What are the educational needs of the participants in the SfH regarding the use of ICT in the teaching-learning process?
 - a. administrators
 - b. faculty

2. THE RESEARCH MODEL

This study is designed as a case study - one of the research designs that convey the characteristics of the qualitative research method- because a case study makes it possible to examine the ICT integration process in the institution comprehensively by revealing the views of all the participants in the process of the integration of ICT into educational institutions, by observing faculty members in their classes for the research purposes, and by providing supportive data through document analysis (Becker, Dawson, Devine, Hannum, Hill, Leydens, et al., 2005; Bogdan & Biklen, 1998; Gall, Gall & Borg, 1999; Usluel, Mumcu & Demirarslan, 2007; Yin, 1998).

3. THE RESEARCH ENVIRONMENT

The present study was carried out in the SfH located in the body of Anadolu University, Eskisehir. The SfH is the first and the only higher education institution that gives vocational education to hearing-impaired students in Turkey. The



educational programs having been executed in the SfH since 1993, include Graphic Arts Bachelor's Degree Program, Ceramic Arts Bachelor's Degree Program in the Department of Applied Fine Arts; Computer Operator Training Associate Degree Program in the Department of Administrative Vocations; and Architectural Drafting Associate Degree Program in the Department of Architecture. SfH has a one year Turkish Preparation Class where the students upgrade their language skills. Students passing the Turkish Competence Exam begin from the first year of their education.

4. PARTICIPANTS

The participants of the study were all from the SfH. The total of 3 administrators, two of whom were vice principals and one of whom was the principal of the school. Towards the requests of the administrators their real names were used in this research. The school principal's name is Mr.Cem. While one of the vice principals, Mrs.Pinar, was in charge of Ceramic Arts Bachelor's Degree Program, the other vice principal, Mrs.Nur, was in charge of Computer Operator Training Associate Degree Program. The total of 21 faculty members, one of whom was a professor, four of whom were assistant professors, and sixteen of whom were instructors; and a total of 60 hearing-impaired students are the other participants.

As an instructor in Computer Operator Training Associate Degree Program in the SfH, the first author was the researcher. The other members of the research team constituted the trustworthiness committee. The second and fourth authors of this article were experienced in educational technology. The third author was an expert of education of individuals with hearing loss and qualitative research.

The researcher collected the research data as a participant observer. Participant observation, being a member of a group as well as the researcher of the study, is considered the most important instrument in qualitative studies. The role of the instructor/researcher differs from the role of an instructor alone and from the role of a researcher alone. During the research process the researcher took advantages of being insider. However, she had to take some prevention against the disadvantages that could have created unvalid data (Coghlan, 2003; Herrmann, 1989; Rouney, 2005; Tedlock, 2000).

5. DATA COLLECTION

The research data were collected from the student and faculty through the use of semi-structured interviews, open-ended questionnaires, reflective research journal, documents and archival records. In order to reveal the views of the administrators, a semi-structured interview form was used, while an open-ended questionnaire form was used to reveal the perspectives of the faculty members and the students. The validity of the data-collection tools was carried out by the trustworthiness committee.

6. DATA ANALYSIS

Unlike some forms of research in which the data examined only at the end of the information collection period, case study research involves ongoing examination and interpretation of the data in order to reach tentative conclusions and to refine the research process (Hancock & Algozzine, 2006). All the collected data in this research analyzed inductively, going from the particular - the detailed data- to the general- codes and themes. The transcriptions were read and coded by trustworthiness committee. The transcriptions coded were then turned into themes to be used for the findings of the study (Creswell, 2005). The reflective journal entries were utilized as supportive data in writing this article.

7. RESULTS

7.1. Administrators' Views about the Educational Needs of the Faculty Members Regarding the ICT Integration

The administrators' views about the educational needs of the faculty members in the SfH were turned into themes as 1) activities organized as an administrator for the faculty members; i) in-service training activities organized in the scope of a project, ii) in-service training activities organized not relating any project, 2) educational needs of the administrators as faculty members; i) the rationale for the needs, ii) the topic of the activity.

7.1.1. Activities organized as an administrator for the faculty members

In-service training activities organized in the scope of a project

The administrators of the SfH stated that the ICT infrastructure of the SfH was established with the United Nations Project developed in 1993. In this respect, the vice principle Mrs.Nur reported that in-



service training activities were organized as short seminars and meetings that allowed preparing lecture notes for the ICT use of faculty members. Mrs.Nur also stated that there were other activities organized at the school like meetings, presentations, and papers within the “Project of Balanced Literacy” and added that these activities could be considered as in-service training activities organized for the ICT use of faculty members. In line with the goal of the Project of Balanced Literacy Instruction, “organizing in-service training activities for cooperation between the language and vocational courses” was a statement of Mrs.Nur regarding the ICT use of faculty members.

“Organizing meetings to motivate the faculty members for future” was another statement of the principle Mr.Cem regarding the ICT use of faculty members.

In-service training activities organized not relating any project

Mr.Cem regarding the activities related to the ICT use of faculty members as “purchase of ICT”. The administrator also reported that “.... it is up to them” meaning that the use of ICT in the teaching-learning process depends on the faculty members’ own interest in ICT use.

Considering the ICT use of faculty members, vice principal Mrs.Pinar mentioned about instructing the new programs. She stated that “course-like activities” could be organized and added that there were on-going studies on this issue at the time of the present study. She also reported that an expert could be asked for help and that such studies could be carried out through exchange of information at meetings.

Mr.Cem reported that they tried to update the web-site of the SfH as an activity for the ICT use of faculty members.

7.1.2. Educational needs of the administrators as faculty members

The rationale for the needs

The rationale for the needs of administrators as faculty members regarding the ICT use in the teaching-learning process could be stated as; “willingness to develop oneself for the new versions of the programs” (2), “a desire to have animated PowerPoint presentations” (1), “being able to support oneself technically” (1), “keeping up with the innovations in the field of courses” (1).

Since the students in the SfH were informed about the new versions of the programs, Mrs.Nur reported that as a faculty member she had to develop herself in terms of the new versions of the programs. Similarly, Mrs.Pinar stated that at the moment, 3D programs were used and therefore added that it was necessary for them to learn these programs to keep up with the innovations in the Ceramic education field.

The topic of the activity

When the topics of the activities that the administrators needed as faculty members were examined, it was found out that the faculty members suggested some topics for the activities regarding both their and students’ professional development.

Mrs.Pinar expressed her desire to take training on the 3D programs yet stated that in fact, she wanted to use this program in her own teaching-learning process for the professional development of his students. Similar to her colleague, actually, Mrs.Nur put forward suggestions for the professional development of the students as she expresses her need regarding the new versions of the programs.

As for their own professional development, the administrators suggested such topics for activities as designing Web-pages (1), programs for hobbies (1), fixing computers (1), strategies for searching on the Internet (1) and preparing presentations supported by visuals and animations (1).

7.2. The Views of the Faculty Members about Their Educational Needs in the ICT Integration Process

The educational needs of the faculty members of the SfH regarding the use of ICTs were grouped under five themes such as 1- the rationale for the needs, 2- the type of the activity, 3- the structuring of the activity, 4- the subject of the activity, and 5- increasing the motivation. The examination of the data revealed that the faculty members put forward suggestions regarding the subject of the activity, the type of the activity and the rationale for the needs related both to their own professional development and to the development of their students in terms of the use of ICT.

7.2.1. The rationale for the needs

The faculty members reported their rationale for their needs to develop themselves stating “keeping up with the technology”(2), “using basic programs (Word, Excel) skillfully”(1), “willing to know how



to use a number of computer programs effectively” (1), “knowing about the innovations” (1), “Giving importance to the views of the new generation as they know the system better than us” (1), “Faculty members’ having sufficient knowledge and equipment” (1), “the necessity of the activities that require the use of the same language and technology as those of the target population” (1), “the need for having more knowledge about and better education on the use of basic programs” (1), “the necessity to know how to use ICT in the teaching-learning process of the hearing-impaired” (1).

Similar to the administrators, it was seen that four of the faculty members in fact put forward the rationale for the needs regarding the students’ academic development while stating their own rationale for the needs regarding the use of ICTs. It was found that two faculty members who were teaching in the same program and who suggested increasing the course-hours stated their rationale saying that “they teach all of their courses on applied-basis on computers”. Another faculty member reported his rationale saying that “as I am a teacher of technical drawing, three-dimensional drawing programs make it possible to do technical drawing on a computer and to examine the model in all dimensions”.

Similar to the administrators, the basis of the rationales for the needs of the faculty members could be said to be the willingness to keep up with the new technologies for their professional development and for effective planning of teaching.

7.2.2. The type of the activity

The faculty members suggested 8 different types of activities while stating their educational needs regarding their ICT use. These activity types were reported as courses (6), seminars (3), short-time educational activities (3), practice (1), conversations (1), introductory activities (1), field trips (1), introductory and informative programs (1).

One of the six faculty members who wanted “courses” as an activity type especially stated that these courses should be organized “within the campus”. One of the faculty members who reported “seminars” as an activity type drew the attention to the continuity of these activities stating that they should be “continuous”. Another faculty member who wanted short-time educational activities stated that they needed activities to be organized at the school saying “short trainings in the school”. The other faculty member who wanted activities in the

type of “conversations” regarding the ICT use reported that these conversations should be “full of short and instructional information”.

All the activities that faculty members wanted for their own development regarding the use of ICTs were in-service training activities. One faculty member put forward a suggestion regarding the quality of these in-service trainings stressing “a functional and purposeful in-service activity”.

Another faculty member, while stating her educational needs regarding the use of ICTs, suggested three different types of activities for student development such as “creating forum environment”, “taking photos during field trips and sharing them on the Internet”, and “activities for vocational courses”. The faculty member also stated that these activities could develop students’ viewpoint about the environment.

7.2.3. The structuring of the activity

Six of the faculty members who responded to the questionnaire stated their views about the structuring of the activities regarding the in-service trainings that they needed for ICT use. While one of them wanted the activities to be organized by expert trainers saying “courses from experts”, another faculty member wanted these activities to be carried out by a friend saying “intimate atmosphere”. Similarly, another faculty member suggested structuring the activity they needed saying that “everybody should share the problems they have encountered with each other and find a solution to these problems”. The other faculty member stated that he wanted to benefit from the activities “free of charge”. Another faculty member suggested “compulsory attendance to courses” regarding the structuring of activities. Another faculty member, focusing on the use of ICTs for the training of the hearing-impaired, stated that the activities should be organized through “the cooperation of both language teachers and education technologists”.

7.2.4. The topic of the activity

It was seen that except for one, all the faculty members who suggested topics for the activities offered activity topics in line with their own professional development. As for the one faculty member, she suggested an activity subject both for his own and of his students’ professional development.

Three of the faculty members who suggested activity topics for their own development wanted activities on the topic of “effective use of basic



computer programs (Word, Excel)". Three other faculty members wanted activities on the topic of the "Internet". Two of the three faculty members who wanted activities regarding the internet wanted activities on the topic of "searching sources and reaching academic information on the internet", while the other faculty member wanted "trainings on the establishment of an internet web-site". Two faculty members wanted activities on the topic of "use of computer-based equipment", while one faculty member wanted activities on the topic of "use of keyboard" saying that "If only there were a course on keyboard use, we would join that course". Two other faculty members suggested an activity topic and made a very general statement saying "use of ICTs". When the demands of the faculty members regarding the topics of the activities were examined technically, it was seen that one faculty member stated her need related to the subject of "active use and technical instruction" and that another member reported her need related to the subject of "technical problems experienced in ICT use". One of the faculty members wanted activities regarding the subject of "use of new technologies", while another faculty member demanded an activity regarding the topic of "more effective use of ICT in the teaching-learning process for the hearing-impaired students".

Another faculty member stated the topic of the activity he needed as "introducing a web-site on the internet" and "developing a student's viewpoint about the environment", and in fact, by reporting this, the faculty member suggested an activity subject for the development of his students.

7.2.5. Increasing the motivation

Regarding the activities to be organized for the use of ICTs, two of the faculty members stated that their motivation in in-service training activities should be increased by saying "emphasizing the importance of the ICT use and encouraging its use" and "encouraging participation in the present courses and seminars".

8. DISCUSSION

In the present study, the views of both the administrators and the faculty members about the ICT use in the teaching-learning process provided important evidences for the determination of the case.

The projects on ICT having been carried out since the establishment of the SfH have a structure that supports the ICT integration. The

administrators organize many activities on the ICT use of faculty members in the scope of several projects including the purchase of ICT. Therefore, they hold the opinion that more systematic studies should be carried out. Schiller (2003), claimed that without the support of school administrators, particularly the principal, educational potential of ICT may not be realized. Receiving the support of the administrator has a great significance for the activities to be carried out. Similarly, Demirarslan and Usluel (2006) reported in their study that for an effective ICT integration into the teaching-learning process, teachers are in need of sufficient equipment and software and access to ICT sources as well as are in need of the support of the administrator. In this respect, the fact that the administrators of the SfH considered the current studies insufficient could be interpreted as a positive sign that they will support future studies.

For any progress in the process of ICT integration, the fact that administrators are not sufficiently involved in ICT planning together with teachers or faculty members and that they do not sufficiently support ICT integration are considered to be important obstacles (Hogan & Farron, 2000). The administrators of SfH developed a viewpoint about in-service training considering the instructive skills of faculty members in the ICT integration. The reason for this could be the fact that the administrators, besides their official duties as administrators, also taught courses as faculty members. In this respect, the fact that the administrators of the SfH also taught courses as a faculty member in the school and participated in the planning process knowing the shortcomings in ICT use was beneficial for a progress in the process of ICT integration.

The teachers or the faculty members who have a key role in the ICT integration process should have the necessary knowledge and skills in using ICT (Cope & Ward, 2002; Galanouli, Murphy & Gardner, 2004; Jedsokog & Nissen, 2004). The faculty at the SfH stated that they needed in-service training through which they would be able to develop their knowledge and skills in ICT use in the teaching-learning process. In this respect, the in-service training types most wanted by the faculty regarding ICT use included courses, seminars and short-time educational activities. The faculty also stated that the in-service training activities should continuously be carried out by experts, in an intimate atmosphere, within the campus or the school, and free of charge. The fact that the faculty members wanted the in-service training activities to



be organized in an intimate environment as short-time and continuous activities is parallel to the rules of adult training (Duman, 2000; Galbraith, 2004). Almost all the faculty members put forward suggestions in relation to the quantity of in-service trainings mentioning the short duration and distant place of free-of-charge in-service trainings, while one of the faculty members put forward suggestion in relation to the quality of these in-service trainings saying “a functional and purposeful in-service activity”. The demand that faculty members should pay more attention to the quality of in-service activities rather than to the quantity of these in-service activities is in fact a demand that all faculty members are expected to state. However, depending on the high class-load of faculty members and on their responsibility to study hard for their academic development and promotion, it could be stated that they pay their primary attention to such quantitative points of in-service activities as time and place.

Some faculty members wanted the administrators to encourage them for the use of ICT in the teaching-learning process. In this respect, the fact that faculty members expected the administrators to give support in every stage of the activities and that they thus did not dare to take the first step may not be considered as an attitude of an effective faculty member.

As the students at the SfH were hearing-impaired, it is pleasing that one of the faculty members stated that it is necessary to know how to use ICT in the teaching-learning process of the hearing-impaired and that it would be better to organize the activities with the cooperation of both the language teachers and the education technologists. The reason is that an effective use of ICT depends on “the choice of tools and methods appropriate to the needs of students” (Demetriadis et. al., 2003; Herzig, 2004; Van den Berg, Vandenberghe & Slegers, 1999; Van Melle, Cimellaro & Shulha, 2003). When the students are hearing-impaired, it becomes more important to choose the tools and methods appropriate to the academic and language needs of the students. Therefore, it could be considered a good point that a faculty member drew the attention to this situation, stated her related needs, and put forward related suggestions.

The faculty members at the SfH, while stating their educational needs regarding the ICT use, were observed to put forward suggestions for both their own development and development of their students. It is a fact that faculty members have two

basic duties like teaching and researching. In order to achieve the desired quality in higher education, it is important that faculty members have good field knowledge and research skills besides their basic duties of teaching. In this respect, it is a good point that faculty members wanted to develop themselves and their students not only in academic issues but also in ICT use. The content of the activities that the faculty members needed most were effective use of basic computer programs, strategies for search on the internet, and computer equipment. Some of the faculty members reported that they had educational needs regarding the use of up-to-date computer programs. The reason for this could be the use of up-to-date versions of the computer programs in the teaching-learning process in the SfH.

In conclusion, the SfH is the only higher education institution that gives vocational education to hearing-impaired students in Turkey. Therefore, for an effective integration of ICT into this institution, it is necessary that faculty members have the necessary knowledge and skills regarding the use of ICT in the teaching-learning process of especially the hearing-impaired students. As a result of the present study, several suggestions were put forward for future studies and practices.

In terms of practices in the SfH, the administrators may encourage faculty members to use ICT in the teaching-learning process. Furthermore, short-time but constant in-service training activities regarding the use of ICT could be organized. Field experts employed at the school can be consulted for in-service training activities regarding the use of ICT. In addition, cooperation could be established between the language teachers and the field experts of ICT use in the teaching-learning process of the hearing-impaired students.

As for future studies, action research as in-service training activities could be carried out for the use of ICT in the teaching-learning process of the hearing-impaired students. Using different research methods, the educational needs of the faculty members at the SfH could be determined. The findings of research carried out with faculty members who teach students with different handicaps could be compared with the findings of this study.

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