

## Views of Instructors Teaching in Open and Distance Learning About Learning Applications: The Use of Youtube as A Learning Source in Open and Distance Education

Açık ve Uzaktan Öğrenmede Ders Veren Öğretim Elemanlarının Öğrenme Uygulamalarına İlişkin Görüşleri: Youtube'un Açık ve Uzaktan Öğretimde Öğrenme Kaynağı Olarak Kullanılması

### Abstract

*With the advent of technology, information-oriented services such as education have been supported by digital applications. The widespread use of online videos on social networks, including YouTube, among educational materials and learning resources increases the effectiveness of learning. This study examines the views of faculty members teaching open and distance learning about using Youtube as a learning resource. In this context, semi-structured interviews were conducted with 10 lecturers teaching distance learning by developing curriculum materials in their own disciplines. In this study, the findings obtained from semi-structured in-depth interviews are presented under certain headings. Collaborative learning objects on YouTube are seen as an effective tool to improve the learning experience. Instructors are encouraged to integrate YouTube into their own lessons in order to take advantage of their unique advantages in the context of learning/teaching.*

### Öz

*Teknolojinin ortaya çıkışı ile eğitim gibi bilgi odaklı hizmetlerin dijital uygulamalarla desteklenmesi sağlanmıştır. Youtube dahil sosyal ağlarda bulunan çevrimiçi videoların eğitim materyali ve öğrenme kaynakları arasında yaygın kullanımı öğrenmedeki etkinliği arttırmaktadır. Bu çalışmanın amacı, açık ve uzaktan öğrenmede ders veren öğretim elemanlarının Youtube'un öğrenme kaynağı olarak kullanılması hakkındaki görüşlerini belirlemektir. Bu bağlamda kendi disiplin alanlarında müfredat materyallerini geliştirip, uzaktan öğrenmede ders veren 10 öğretim elemanı ile yapılandırılmış görüşme gerçekleştirilmiştir. Çalışmada yapılandırılmış derinlemesine görüşmelerden elde edilen bulgular belli başlıklar altında sunulmuştur. YouTube'daki işbirlikli öğrenme nesneleri öğrenme deneyimini geliştirebilecek etkili bir araç olarak görülmektedir. Katılımcılar, YouTube'un olumlu yönlerinden bahsederken, aynı zamanda telif hakları, dijital yeterlilik, öğrenen öğrenen arasındaki sınırın ortadan kalkması gibi YouTube kullanımındaki kısıtlamalarla ilgili endişelerini de belirtmişlerdir. Araştırmada, öğretmenlerin, öğrenme/öğretme bağlamındaki kendine özgü avantajlarından yararlanabilmeleri için YouTube'u kendi derslerine entegre etmeleri önerilmektedir.*

### Introduction

Advances in technology have enabled participants and users in education to develop and share content for learning and teaching purposes. Wang (2017; 279) claimed that learning is ubiquitous and that most of the learning takes place outside the formal education environment. Open educational resources that teachers incorporate into learning scenarios are shared by everyone with access to the Internet, providing opportunities for access to better content and quality of education (Shoufan, 2019: 453). According to Tackett et al. (2018: 1150), online videos improve learning by activating audiovisual pathways and helping students reinforce a broad body of knowledge more efficiently. It is a fact that the use of social media tools as educational material in higher education supports the production of knowledge among both the teachers and the learners. According to



**Birgül Taşdelen**

Dr. Öğr. Üyesi,  
Gümüşhane Üniversitesi,  
birgultasdelen@gmail.com

### Article Type / Makale Türü

Research Article / Araştırma Makalesi

### Keywords

Social Media, YouTube, The Use of YouTube in Open and Distance Education

### Anahtar Kelimeler

Social Media, YouTube, YouTube'un açık ve uzaktan öğrenmede kullanımı.

JEL: E69, E60, E65

Submitted: 17 / 09 / 2019

Accepted: 10 / 10 / 2019

Gürcan (2015), social media is used in educational practices to improve the interaction and communication skills of both learners and teachers, to increase participation, to provide peer support, and to understand cooperative learning. Sánchez, Cortijo and Javed (2014) emphasize the importance of social networks for educational purposes in their study “Students’ Perceptions of Facebook for Academic Purposes”, arguing that social networks have been one of the greatest revolutions in the Academy in the last few years. According to Osgerby and Rush (2015: 337), the potential of using social media as a learning tool is among the topics worth researching. The most popular examples of social media are YouTube, Facebook, Instagram and Twitter (Selwyn and Stirling, 2016).

Established in 2005 by three former PayPal employees, YouTube is the world's largest media sharing site, with more than 1.9 billion users watching hundreds of millions of hours of video a day (YouTube, 2019). The University of California, Berkeley, has enabled faculties in the fields of medicine and performing arts to open their own YouTube channels to develop co-ordinated studies between instructors and learners and to receive simultaneous feedback from learners (Everson, Gundlach and Miller, 2013: 75; Torres-Ramírez et al., 2014). The majority of students watch YouTube videos to support their study and argue that their faculties should be more interested in YouTube (Rabee et al., 2015; 1). Therefore, given the fact that learners cannot live without internet in the digital age (Troop, 2011), it is important which methods we focus on as teachers.

In this respect, it is thought that analyzing how academic staff use YouTube in teaching practices can help to better understand the perceptions of YouTube and to support lifelong learning. This study focuses on the perceptions of lecturer academics in open and distance education in Turkey about the potential use of YouTube in open and distance education as a learning source and its pitfalls. Additionally, it tries to seek to identify factors that may affect YouTube's adoption for Teaching. First of all, the article introduces the relevant literature and methodological framework of the research and then explains and discusses the results that include recommendations for further research.

## 1. Literature Review

Looking at the literature on educational research, many studies have reported a positive relationship between social media and teaching and learning (Everson, 2013: 70). Dunkan et al. (2013), in their study “YouTube as a source of clinical skills education”, state that YouTube videos contribute to the critical thinking abilities of students by making connections between theory and practice. Moran et al. (2011), in their study “Teaching, Learning, and Sharing: How Today's Higher Education Faculty Use Social Media”, conducted a survey with the participation of 1920 students to investigate the effects of educational use of YouTube, Facebook and Twitter. According to the results, a 61% of the participants use online videos in the classroom, more than 70% think that YouTube has value or is invaluable as an educational material. Clifton and Mann (2011), in their study investigating the effects of using YouTube in nursing education, stated that YouTube improves students' attention and retention because visual cues are easier to remember than auditory ones.

In the study of Torres-Ramírez et al. (2014) investigating teaching the content about edible sources through YouTube, it was concluded that the use of YouTube videos as material in the course content had a positive effect on the students. In a study by Graham et al. (2017), which investigated motivation and learning-enhancing strategies in higher education, a questionnaire was applied to groups of 127 students studying in the basic undergraduate accounting department at UK and New Zealand universities. As a result of the study, it was reported that when online sessions were used to increase traditional teaching methods, students responded more easily and learned more quickly. Baran (2010) researched the use of Facebook in open and distance education courses and stated that 90.6% of the participants found Facebook helpful in communicating with their instructors and 56.3% of them stated that Facebook enables them to get to know their classmates better. In this study, it is stated that curriculum applications should be planned and managed in a way that encourages and

supports instructional design and online discussion strategies, student-student, student-content and student-teacher interaction.

Özen et al. (2018) also tried to measure the perceptions of Atatürk University Open Education Faculty students about the use of social media tools in education. In this study, it is seen that students use social media extensively because Open Education materials and the questions asked in previous exams are shared on social media intensively. As a result of the study, it is stated that there is a significant relationship between the time spent on social media daily and perceptions about the educational dimension of social media. In the study of Quong et al. (2018), the effect of closed group formation on social media on online classes was measured and a questionnaire was applied to 330 undergraduate and graduate students at a university in Texas. As a result of this study, closed social networks can be used as a tool to increase students' participation, interaction and social presence, as well as to reduce the processing distance in online and mixed learning environments.

Most of the studies focused on the perceptions of learners about the use of social media tools for learning purposes, while few studies examined teachers' perceptions about the benefits of using YouTube (Manca, 2016: 218). Moran et al. (2011) investigated how 1920 faculty members use social media and stated that 98% are aware of YouTube and 90% use social media in their courses. As a result of this study, YouTube was found to be the most frequently used social media resource in education, and more than 40% of the educators stated that students need to review a task through social media. These findings show that YouTube can be a highly used tool by educators in the education sector and a valuable tool for collaborative learning. Greenhow and Askari (2017) stated that video sharing sites such as YouTube may be among the creative teaching methods. It is claimed that social networking sites in particular have the potential to increase the interaction between teachers, learners and parents, and learners demand current learning models against the traditional learning model. Li and Wong's (2019) survey with 374 academics from Hong Kong higher education institutions revealed that they needed online applications in education for professional development and to complement traditional teaching approaches.

## **2. Rationale for Study**

The study was designed to investigate the views of academics on the use of YouTube in open and distance education, using the interview technique, one of the qualitative research techniques. The study also aims to investigate the motivations of academics that may lead to YouTube's adoption for teaching, the ways in which they are used in teaching and the obstacles that may prevent their use. Taking these goals into consideration, the study aims to answer the following from semi-structured in-depth interviews developed from the study of Manca and Ranieri (2016):

1. What do academicians think about the effects of use of YouTube on learning process in open and distance learning?
2. What are the determinants that will enable academics to use YouTube in open and distance learning environments?
3. How do academicians evaluate the contribution of re-learning objects in YouTube videos to education?
4. What are the factors that prevent academic staff from using YouTube in open and distance learning environments?

## **3. Method**

### **3.1. Participants and Data Collection**

Semi-structured interview technique, one of the qualitative research techniques, was used in this study which aims to understand the obstacles that may prevent the use of YouTube as an information sharing tool and the obstacles that may prevent their use in open and distance learning programs. In the semi-structured interview technique, the questions were developed based on the literature review in which gaps were identified. In addition to this, a questionnaire that goes from general to private was tried to be followed in the interview forms. In the interviews, the questions were mostly built in accordance with the standardized form. The audio recordings of 30-60 minutes

---

of semi-structured interviews with 10 academicians using YouTube open and distance learning programs were taken as samples. The transcribed data were reviewed and verified by each interviewer. During the analysis of the data, the real names of the participants were kept confidential according to the ethical rules of the research and each participant was given a pseudonym name such as K1, K2, K3.... In order to increase internal validity, the interview forms were reviewed by two qualitative research experts and finalized with a cross-coding approach to remove redundant and repetitive themes. In this study, the findings obtained from semi-structured in-depth interviews are presented under certain headings

### **3.2. Findings**

All respondents said they regularly use YouTube in open and distance learning programs. The data were copied and analyzed thematically. As a result of the analysis, a total of four themes have emerged: priority resource, self-recognition, preparation and healthy interaction and cooperation. In this study, the findings obtained from semi-structured in-depth interviews are presented under certain headings.

#### **3.2.1. Priority Resource**

The participants were first asked how YouTube's use affects the learning process in open and distance learning. Most of the participants stated that digital media technologies such as YouTube and Facebook were the first source they used to support the lecture in the open and distance learning process. K10, one of the participants, stated that: "Nowadays, digital technologies, which create flexible framed applications, are very important for realizing and supporting the learning and communication process in the absence of face-to-face education.

YouTube is also one of the first digital technologies that can be used in distance learning activities to enable multi-faceted interaction and joint learning of learning environments.". Additionally, K1 reported that "Social media tools such as YouTube support distance and time independence of information and reach an accessible level in distance learning activities where concepts such as equal opportunities in education and access to learning resources gain importance. For example, YouTube is equipped with tools such as instant messaging and video uploading, watching, and sharing, allowing easy sharing of information between users and teachers.". K3 added that "Many people engage in social interaction through social media such as YouTube and Facebook. Today's students are different from the past. That is why, I think that the education system should be reintegrated according to the characteristics of the era. Therefore, I would like to think that social media tools are one of the main sources of learning as a motivating element for teachers to prepare the course content, to make it easier to connect with learners and to make their learner active participants rather than passive learners... I think that YouTube will be more preferred as an open and distance learning resource than other social media tools since using YouTube as part of the learning experience will also support the main text simultaneously with images, sound and visual images. Providing users with content-related alternatives (footer and header information, video content and audio streaming), YouTube enables learning to be more effective.

#### **3.2.2. Motivating Learning Activity**

In order to find out what are the factors that motivate participants to use YouTube in their learning activities, it is necessary to direct the question "What are the main motivations for using YouTube in open and distance learning environments?". K2 reported that "YouTube is a savior for me... because when I explain a theory just by word, I think that what I convey is very shallow. But when I use video in the learning process, the video I use both summarizes the subject and becomes more fun in terms of learning. In an environment where the subject is explained only in words, the learner misses important details and the teacher needs additional information to strengthen the plot. Therefore, YouTube can be seen as an important medium for deepening educational activities.". In the same line K9 stated that "...One of the best adjectives of open and distance learning, which contradicts the building blocks of the traditional education system, is availability. Therefore, participants can chat with other participants and exchange messages through the discussion groups they create during the course of the broadcast through speech texts added to YouTube, making the

---

---

learner feel more comfortable in communicating with their teachers.” K9 acknowledged YouTube's potential as a motivating tool and expressed concern about the lifting of the boundary between teacher and learner

### **3.2.3. Obstacles**

In order to find out what are the difficulties in open and distance learning applications, “What are the factors that prevent academic staff from using YouTube in open and distance learning environments” is asked to the participants. K5 underlined the necessary skills for programming language by stating that “I spend more than four to five hours a day, even searching for YouTube videos on any topic that I'm going to teach.” K1 also states that learners need to use social networking skills to make them think more deeply about course material, otherwise they will often fail to understand and evaluate messages. K7 reported negative feedback by stating that “Learners can make inappropriate comments through the return channel. This situation distracts the learners and causes the teacher to deviate from the subject. Therefore, the active listening of the learner and the loss of respect for the learner causes this situation to blur the boundary between the traditional teaching student.” K9 also stressed that the teacher who uses YouTube videos as learning material should have knowledge of ownership and intellectual property.

### **3.2.4. Cooperative Learning Objects**

It is seen that the technologies used in today's open and distance learning systems contribute to the information access processes of the learners at different stages. As one of the social media tools, YouTube offers opportunities to address new learning practices. K8 expresses this situation as follows: “In this project, the learners preferred to use YouTube mostly in their project assignments since YouTube was providing feedback to enable learners to add short video clips to online presentations they prepared to explain the issues, and to allow other learners to express their views simultaneously.” K1 drew attention to the automatic feedback feature by stating that “One of the RLOs on YouTube is the automatic feedback feature. This feature allows the learner to use his or her knowledge and skills, providing clues on how to correct the error. This makes the learning process more effective.”

K10 states that, thanks to the support units, the learner can continue the learning process with his/her individual abilities. “Videos on YouTube are actually a digital learning resource that is easily accessible to learners. Online support units that describe how to watch, interpret, and share videos are examples of reusable learning objects called RLOs. These objects are communication tools that allow learners who use these tools outside the classroom to have control over the production and sharing of videos. K4 also states that features such as interactive buttons on YouTube, creating personal video playlist pages, language selection are tools that support learning design, and these resources can be combined to promote harmony between learning activities and assessment, helping to improve the learning process. K3 emphasizes that such learning objects have the ability to reinforce knowledge without dissipation by stimulating multiple senses, thereby improving learning: “YouTube's most important RLO for me is the ability to share a certain minute of the video as a link when we find a video about YouTube's content, which includes personal storage and a wealth of video. Thanks to this link, teachers save time and learners testify to content and events, rather than reading content from a book. Teachers can have the learner focus on important content in videos, rather than showing offensive content in the videos they share. In addition, videos that are shared and recorded in online lessons can be watched again by the learners later.” K2 stated that “In an online environment, learners lack the warmth that enriches the emotional aspects of learning. I think that the pedagogical gaps in open and distance learning will be filled by cooperative learning objects. YouTube, the most popular interactive way to create, share and consume content, has directly and strongly influenced open and distance learning. Online courses that enable the recognition of learners, educational methods and educational materials from different regions of the country provide educators with the opportunity to test, compare and improve their knowledge and teaching methods through videos. This feature of the technological revolution has led to the development of skills in the learning process. In this way, an individual can reach a source of

information that he has not seen before, where he can watch various videos and learn music free of charge on the subject that he does not understand. Individuals can personalize their formal and informal personal YouTube pages with pictures, music and participate in the social media platform where they are organized.

### Conclusion and Discussion

This study explains the views of faculty members in open and distance education on YouTube's effectiveness in teaching and learning. The study agrees with Dewitt et al. (2013), who states that teachers often use YouTube in teaching and learning. Educators talked about the positive aspects of YouTube such as motivation and participation enhancement, free use, flexible learning, as well as concerns about restrictions on YouTube use, such as copyrights, digital competence, the disappearance of the boundary between the teacher and the learner.

Among these concerns, the pedagogical, social and technical responsibilities of the instructor were mostly emphasized. It was observed that a regular working team could not be established in terms of technical responsibilities in distance education. As a matter of fact, Bilgiç, Doğan and Seferoğlu (2011) emphasized the need for a team consisting of content developer, software developer, system and network expert, technical support, trainers, project managers and promotional and organization officers. The findings are consistent with the study results of Guasch et al. (2010), which showed that the online teacher's emotional or social role is important in establishing a meaningful relationship with students. It is thought that the pedagogical gaps in open and distance learning will accelerate the learning process of the students through cooperative learning objects that encourage interactions, guide in the preparation of assignments and enable students to feel meaningful dialogue. The lack of structure on the YouTube platform makes them less participant on the platform. Visual objects from collaborative learning objects used in open and distance learning systems will make it easier for students to visualize and understand the subject in an environment away from human contact.

Learning objects are viewed as a complementary tool to improve teaching / learning for an open and distance education system. The findings of the study support Sezen's (2012) study, which states that high levels of cooperation increase student motivation.

### Recommendations

These recommendations were made based on study. Both learners and instructors should be informed about how to use YouTube intelligently for instructional purposes as a source of learning in open and distance learning. In addition to that, by understanding the instructor and learner perspective on the use of YouTube, they should be encouraged to build cognitive awareness of how trainers can increase their motivation for online learning.

### References

- Balcikanli, G. S. (2012). Social networking in physical education: Undergraduate students' views on Ning. *Turkish Online Journal of Distance Education*, 13(2), 277-290.
- Baran, B. (2010). Facebook as a formal instructional environment. *British Journal of Educational Technology*, 41(6), E146-E149.
- Bilgiç, H. G., Doğan, D., & Seferoğlu, S. S. (2011). Türkiye'de yükseköğretimde çevrimiçi öğretimin durumu: İhtiyaçlar, sorunlar ve çözüm önerileri. *Yükseköğretim Dergisi*, 1(2), 80-87.
- Clifton, A., & Mann, C. (2011). Can YouTube enhance student nurse learning?. *Nurse education today*, 31(4), 311-313.
- DeWitt, D., Alias, N., Siraj, S., Yaakub, M. Y., Ayob, J., & Ishak, R. (2013). The potential of Youtube for teaching and learning in the performing arts. *Procedia-Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 103, 1118-1126.
- Everson, M., Gundlach, E., & Miller, J. (2013). Social media and the introductory statistics course. *Computers in Human Behavior*, 29(5), A69-A81.

- 
- Graham, A., Toon, I., Wynn-Williams, K., & Beatson, N. (2017). Using 'nudges' to encourage student engagement: An exploratory study from the UK and New Zealand. *The International Journal of Management Education*, 15(2), 36-46.
- Greenhow, C., & Askari, E. (2017). Learning and teaching with social network sites: A decade of research in K-12 related education. *Education and information technologies*, 22(2), 623-645.
- Guasch, T., Alvarez, I. and Espasa, A. (2010). University teacher competencies in a virtual teaching/learning environment: Analysis of a teacher training experience. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 26(2), 199-206.
- Gürçan, H. I. (2015). Contribution of Social Media to the Students' Academic Development, *International Journal of Information and Education Technology*, 5(12), 965-968.
- Li, K. C., & Wong, B. T. M. (2019). The professional development needs for the use of educational technology: A survey of the Hong Kong academic community. *Interactive Technology and Smart Education*.
- Manca, S., & Ranieri, M. (2016). Facebook and the others. Potentials and obstacles of social media for teaching in higher education. *Computers & Education*, 95, 216-230.
- Moran, M., Seaman, J., & Tinti-Kane, H. (2011). Teaching, Learning, and Sharing: How Today's Higher Education Faculty Use Social Media. *Babson Survey Research Group*.
- Osgerby, J., & Rush, D. (2015). An exploratory case study examining undergraduate accounting students' perceptions of using Twitter as a learning support tool. *The International Journal of Management Education*, 13(3), 337-348.
- Özen, Ü., Çam, H., Can, D., & Dönmez, Ö. (2018). Uzaktan yükseköğretim öğrencilerinin sosyal medyanın eğitim boyutu konusundaki algıları ve eğitim amaçlı sosyal medya kullanımlarının belirlenmesi. *The Journal of International Scientific Researches*, 3(1), 64-72.
- Quong, J., Snider, S. L., & Early, J. (2018). Reducing transactional distance in online and blended courses through the use of a closed social media platform. *Journal of Educational Technology Systems*, 47(1), 79-100.
- Rabee, R., Najim, M., Sherwani, Y., Ahmed, M., Ashraf, M., Al-Jibury, O., ... & Ahmed, A. (2015). YouTube in medical education: a student's perspective. *Medical education online*, 20.
- Sánchez, R. A., Cortijo, V., & Javed, U. (2014). Students' perceptions of Facebook for academic purposes. *Computers & Education*, 70, 138-149.
- Selwyn, N., & Stirling, E. (2016). Social media and education... now the dust has settled. *Learning, media and technology*, 41(1), 1-5.
- Shoufan, A. (2019). Estimating the cognitive value of YouTube's educational videos: A learning analytics approach. *Computers in Human Behavior*, 92, 450-458.
- Tackett, S., Slinn, K., Marshall, T., Gaglani, S., Waldman, V., & Desai, R. (2018). Medical education videos for the world: an analysis of viewing patterns for a YouTube channel. *Academic Medicine*, 93(8), 1150-1156.
- Torres-Ramírez, M., García-Domingo, B., Aguilera, J., & De La Casa, J. (2014). Video-sharing educational tool applied to the teaching in renewable energy subjects. *Computers & Education*, 73, 160-177.
- Troop, D. (2011). The Beloit College mind-set list welcomes the 'Internet class.' *The Chronicle of Higher Education*. [Available online at: <http://chronicle.com/article/The-Beloit-College-Mind-Set/128783>], Retrieved on September 01, 2019.
- YouTube statistics page. (2019). [Available online at: <https://www.youtube.com/yt/about/press/>]. Retrieved on August 09, 2019.
- Wang, B. T. (2017). Designing mobile apps for English vocabulary learning. *International Journal of Information and Education Technology*, 7(4), 279.
-