

Analysis of Farhangīān University student-teachers' experience of the internship courses during the COVID-۱۹ Pandemic Condition

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Abstract

Internship provides students with the opportunity to have specialized practice in the teaching profession. It helps students to connect theoretical topics with the world of practice, become familiar with their job skills, and especially with practical teaching issues, incorporate what they have learned with the experiences of teachers and guiding teachers, and experience teaching in the real classroom. The internship is at the heart of Farhangīān University's curriculum. The purpose of this study is to investigate the lived experience of Farhangīān University student-teachers from internships in virtual space. For this purpose, a qualitative approach with a descriptive phenomenological design was used. The statistical population of this study included the primary school student-teachers of Farhangīān University from Markazi, Isfahān, Ilām, Māzandarān, and Tehran provinces. The research sample consisted of those primary school student-teachers who had passed at least two internships at virtual space from the mentioned provinces using a purposive sampling method. The Necessary data was obtained using semi-structured interviews. The duration of each interview varied from ۳۰ to ۴۰ minutes, and after ۱۰ interviews, the data was saturated. After conducting the interviews and coding and analyzing them using Nvivo software, the student-teachers' experience of the internship course in virtual space fell into ۴ main themes, including “interaction and communication”, “technology and media literacy”, “teaching”, and “the structure of the internship course” and ۱۷ sub-themes. The results of the study showed that virtual internship training includes opportunities for student teachers such as benefiting from the teaching of other teachers, archiving the teaching of guiding teachers, increasing the internship time, increasing creativity in education, promoting media literacy, and producing electronic content. There are also shortcomings in this training which include: lack of interaction with students, guiding teachers, and school staff; Lack of experience in classroom management; and lack of familiarity with school rules.

Keywords: Internship, Virtual Education, Phenomenology, Farhangīān University

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Introduction

Around the world, teachers are the key element in improving the quality of the education system. For this reason, promoting and improving the competencies and abilities of teachers is one of the main concerns in all educational systems. Teaching profession volunteers undergo professional training programs in order to acquire the required skills and under the supervision of trained teachers and instructors, in order to acquire the necessary skills to accept the professional responsibility at the classroom and school level before entering the teaching profession (Ahmadi & Elhamian , ۱۳۹۹). Teaching practice is the culmination of teacher training activities that develop the human capital and provide better learning experiences for the trainees (Choeng et al, ۲۰۱۴).

In Iran, Farhangian University is the main legal institution for training the manpower required by the educational system. According to its goals in training a competent, efficient and capable teacher, this University offers various courses to improve the general and specialized skills of students. Internship course is one of the specialized and important courses of Farhangian University that connects the diverse and numerous theoretical trainings of the University with the practical knowledge of teaching. This course seeks to make students aware of their future career environment, to use the valuable experiences of their colleagues, and to evaluate their teaching strengths and weaknesses.

A set of internship assignments is planned by supervisors and guiding teachers to help students achieve these goals. Internship provide students with the opportunity to have professional practice in their profession, connect theoretical topics with the world of practice, become familiar with their job skills and especially with the practical teaching issues, combine what they have learned with the experiences of teachers and supervisors and experience it in the realm of the classroom. In a way, internship can be considered as the heart of the teacher training curricula.

Farhangian University, based on the ۱۱th operational goal of the document of fundamental change, in ۲۰۱۴, developed and implemented an internship curriculum with an emphasis on developing the thoughtful teacher approach. Supervisors, guiding teachers and students are the three main sides of this course. This course is offered in ۴ semesters for all disciplines in ۸ units. Problem-solving and familiarity with the situation, reflexive observation and recording experiences in the form of narration takes place during the first internship professional learning. Professional learning in the second internship focuses on the analysis and interpretation of needs and issues in the educational situation, and the professional experience in micro-scale. In the third internship, students are directly responsible for teaching and managing the classroom, understanding the meaning and transferring what they have learned to the new position. In the final internship, students can come to the school based on their experiences as a curriculum planner and they could evaluate the design, production and implementation of the program.

Both experienced and novice teachers believe that the experience gained in internship and teaching practice is one of the most important pillars of teacher preparation (Wilson et al,

۲۰۰۲). Also, the importance of the issue has led to numerous and varied researches on internships in recent years. In what follows, the results of some of these researches are pointed out. Arabzadeh et al. (۱۴۰۰), in a study on "explaining the strategies and consequences of the realization of the internship system based on the training of thoughtful teachers in Farhangian University" found that the most important consequences of the realization of the internship system based on the thoughtful teacher are including the professional development, training the thoughtful teachers and making change in the education system. Ebrahimi et al. (۱۴۰۰) in a study on "designing a coaching model for the student-teacher internship process at Farhangian University" found that components of professional development, actors, and the teaching-learning process can be useful for the teacher-student coaching model. A study which was conducted by Khoroshi et al. (۲۰۱۶) examined the issues and problems of internship course from the perspective of Farhangian University's instructors. The results of this study show that the problems of the internship course can be categorized into two dimensions of the curriculum and its implementation. According to this research, in the dimension of the curriculum, most of the problems are related to the idealistic goals of the course, and in the dimension of implementation, insufficient cooperation of education has been identified as the most important problems. Ahmadi and Elhamian (۲۰۱۶), in a study on "the internship curriculum with the approach of training thoughtful teachers from the perspective of Farhangian University professors" found that the approach of Farhangian University curriculum emphasizes the reflective and situation-oriented practice, however, the content requires the use of combined and applied knowledge. The study on "the lived experience of the internship instructors at Farhangian University" by Islami et al. (۲۰۱۶) shows that the supervisors consider the logic of the internship program acceptable and they have evaluated its objectives as appropriate, however, they have also raised shortcomings such as the weak training of the executives. In a study on "the lived experience of student-teachers of Farhangian University from the new internship program of teacher training in Iran" conducted by Safarnavadeh et al. (۲۰۱۹), it was found that the new internship programs have been effective and they have been able to obtain student-teachers' satisfaction, could increase the students' competence, and help to shape their teacher identity. The results of a study conducted by Jafarian and Mahmoudi (۲۰۱۹) on "Phenomenology of internship guiding teachers' experiences of the new internship plan in Farhangian University of East Azerbaijan Province" show that the new internship plan combines the theory and practice as much as possible and its most important result is transferring the experiences of the guiding teachers to the students.

In ۲۰۱۹, Ghorbani and his colleagues examined the "participatory model of biography writing in the internship curriculum" and the results of their studies indicate that this model can lead to the realization of the goals and strategies hidden in the course units.

Teemant (۲۰۱۴) in a paper on "mixed methods of teacher-learner educational coaching" showed that effective models of teacher professional development are also important for the success of educational reform. Kraft et al (۲۰۱۸), in a study on "the impact of training the teacher coaching on education and success" showed that coaching has a large impact

on the education and a small positive effect on the success. Stellmacher et al (۲۰۲۰) in a study on "the motivation of pre-service selecting of teaching profession: A comparison of vocational education teachers and teachers of comprehensive schools in Germany», describe the motivating factors in choosing the teaching profession and state that one of the motivational factors is the academic requirements and knowing more about the job through courses like internship. The importance of internship is known in developing the capability of teaching in a variety of subjects, while also is makes it possible to achieve the interpersonal interaction skills with students, teachers and parents. Aasir & Khushi (۲۰۱۸), in a study on "understanding the role of internship as an activity-based learning" has examined the impact of internship on Pakistani University students. This study shows that internship is a suitable activity for students to learn and grow that provides practical experiences, group work, knowledge of their strengths, weaknesses and the environment. Hejazi & Bakhtiari (۲۰۲۱) in a study on "the comparative study of teacher training internship curriculum in Iran, Australia and Singapore", compared teacher training internship programs in these three countries. The results of this study indicate that teacher training internship programs in Iran and Singapore are similar to each other and it is different from Australia's one. The differences are in the number of internship units, and that internship programs in Singapore and Australia make extensive collaboration between schools and national educational institutions possible. Based on this study, researchers suggest that internship programs in Iran should be more flexible and program monitoring should be increased.

Overall, past research on internship (Islami et al., ۲۰۱۶; Khoroshi et al., ۲۰۱۷; Ahmadi and Elhamian, ۲۰۱۶) shows that there are several challenges to this course; Challenges such as poor implementation of the internship program, poor agents in coordination between school and University, lack of cooperation between teachers and supervisors. Along with these challenges, in the last two years, coinciding with the outbreak of the Corona virus in December ۲۰۲۰, new conditions arose in which not only Iran, but also all countries in the world were faced with the educational challenges. After the outbreak of this disease, education was changed all over the world, and in order to prevent the "closure of education", virtual education was also introduced and implemented in our country. Education was conducted virtually (offline and online) in both schools and Universities. Whereas e-learning implements and supports teaching-learning electronically with the aim of building knowledge related to personal experience; prior to the outbreak of the coronavirus, many Universities around the world used e-learning to offer their courses, and they had provided the appropriate structure, objectives, and context for such an educational process from the past. However, in the higher education system of Iran, despite the fact that virtual education was officially started in ۲۰۰۱, due to the special social and cultural conditions prevailing in the country, this education has never been widely and appropriately used. Therefore, desirable and appropriate studies on this type of education; especially in terms of the practical lessons has not been done. In e-learning, the form and type of the individual-social relationships change and the new relationships are created between the professor and student and the classroom process, the study of which helps to

improve e-learning. The outbreak of corona virus and the prevalence of e-learning led to different understanding of this type of education among the users.

It should be noted that training of teaching skills should be done in such a way that students to be finally acquainted with their professional skills in the real environment of the classroom. Internship at Farhangian University is important if it could provide the required experience of the real classroom environment, reflective action, pedagogical skills and moral and spritual values for the students. So, given the importance of the fact that the more students become familiar with the skills related to their work and gain more experience, they will use more effective approaches in the learning-teaching process, knowing that the internship environment should contain opportunities for reflecting on the action (Jones, ۲۰۰۶; Piwovar et al, ۲۰۱۳). The fundamental question is, how has the internship curriculum been implemented in virtual space in the last two years, given the stated objectives? In order to answer this question and among the three main aspects of internship, namely students, guiding teachers, and supervisors, this research is intended to investigate the lived experience of students by studying how this training is conducted. Accordingly, the question arises that what has been the students' lived experience of the internship curriculum in virtual space and its implementation? Undoubtedly, if Farhangian University does not provide students with the opportunity to practice teaching skills such as teaching and classroom management, student-teachers would not be able to acquire appropriate skills for teaching and classroom management. Therefore, the purpose of this paper is to describe the lived experiences of students from internship in virtual education in order to show the rate of success of this course and its opportunities and shortcomings in virtual education.

Research methodology

It was a qualitative research with phenomenological design. The phenomenology focuses on the phenomenon as it is experienced and lived by the individual. Therefore, in phenomenology, the question arises that what kind of experience is the lived experience? In phenomenology, the researcher tries to express the phenomenon and the meaning as it is lived in everyday life. Semi-organized interview was used to collect data; i.e., a list of questions was prepared, however, the researchers could ask the unpredicted questions during the interview, if necessary.

Focusing on the core research question, "what is the student-teachers' experience of internship in e-learning?"; interview questions were arranged around two main themes: ۱. How do you evaluate the virtual education of the internship course? ۲. Do you think that the virtual education of the internship course has been effective in shaping the professional identity of the student-teachers?

The research population of this study were primary education student-teachers of Farhangian University from Markazi, Isfahan, Ilam, Mazandaran and Tehran provinces.

The research sample was selected through purposive sampling method. Thus, from among the primary education student- teachers of the department of educational sciences, students of semesters ۶ and ۷ (who have passed at least two internships in virtual space) were selected. The interview process continued until no more information was obtained from the interviews and there was the repetition of data patterns.

In the present study, after interviewing ۲۳ participants, the data were theoretically saturated, however, in order to ensure about some of the extracted themes, interviews continued up to ۳۰ people. Due to the outbreak of corona virus and its limitations, the interviews were conducted by telephone and using the Google Mate platform. Initially, the necessary coordination was made with the participants and then, with their permission, the text of the interviews was transcribed for the in-depth analysis. Each interview took ۳۰ to ۴۰ minutes. At the end of each interview, its transcript was presented to the participants and colleagues to determine the reliability of the data. The data analysis process was conducted using the encoding method and Nvivo software as follows:

- Conducting interview with participants
- Transcribing the interview texts
- Open coding including: reading conversations line by line and extracting the key concepts
- Axial coding including: categorization of data and specifying the final category

Table ۱. the characteristics of participants	
The number of participants	Gender
Markazi province campuses (n=۱۳)	Females (n=۳۶)
Isfahan province campuses (n=۱۲)	Males (n=۱۴)
Ilām province campuses (n=۱۰)	
Māzandarān province campuses (n=۸)	
Tehran province campuses (n=۳)	

Research findings

After conducting the interviews and analyzing them, the lived experience of the student-teachers' of the internship course in virtual space was divided into ۴ main themes and ۱۷ sub-themes.

Table ۲. Major and minor themes	
Major themes (axial coding)	Minor themes (open coding)
Interaction and communication	Lack of interaction with students

	<p>Lack of interaction with guiding teachers Lack of interaction with educational and administrative staff of the school Lack of familiarity with the rules of school Possibility of getting acquainted with the main place of work of the student-teacher in the future</p>
technology	<p>Promoting the skills of content production Promoting the media literacy</p>
teaching	<p>Benefiting from the teaching of other teachers Benefiting from the guiding teacher's teaching at any time Increasing the creativity in teaching Archiving the guiding teacher's teaching Lack of development of classroom management skills Lack of teaching practice in all courses</p>
Internship structure	<p>Increasing the time of internship False and inappropriate reports and narratives Lack of appropriate internship course outline in virtual space Guiding teachers and school principals' ignorance of internship and intern duties</p>

۱. **Interaction and communication:** The participants' experience of spending two years of internship in virtual space was one of the main themes. All participants had consensus that in order to achieve the goals of the internship, it is necessary to interact and communicate with educational factors, including students, guiding teachers, and administrators.

۱.۱. **Lack of interaction with students:** The main element of education from the perspective of research participants is the student. It is one of the key points that in virtual education, it is not possible to communicate face to face with students and the intern is deprived of receiving emotional and objective feedback from students.

"We did not communicate well with the students. No matter how much we were able to communicate, we still needed a space to communicate to see if we could communicate at all," says interviewee ۹. "We may have thought we could communicate well basically, but in practice we did not have the ability to do so." "We were not aware of the students' feedback, a face-to-face communication was needed to solve the students' problems, and the lack of that face-to-face communication made everything happen only on paper," says interviewee ۱۲. "When I do not see the student and his reaction, it is as if I have done practically nothing, but when I teach in front of ۳۰ students, the situation will be much different than when I am sitting at home and just send a video," says interviewee ۴۰.

۲,۱. Lack of interaction with guiding teachers: According to the participants' opinions and experiences, a successful internship requires the use of guiding teachers' experiences. An important part of these experiences is obtained in the form of interactions between the intern and the guiding teacher, and this has not been possible in the virtual training of the internship course.

"There was no deep connection between me, the intern, and the guiding teacher for the question and multiple answers and helping me to improve my teaching skills," says interviewee ۸. "I did not see the guiding teacher, not even once, and it bursts anybody's bubble alot," says interviewee ۱۷. The interviewee ۳۲ says: "The lack of this eye contact made me not know how the teacher felt at that moment when saying some things. Is he angry? "Is he upset and ...».

۳,۱. Lack of interaction with the school's teaching and administrative staff: Participants suggested that in order to become more familiar with their job, they should interact with all school staff, and that part of gaining experience as a teacher is gained through interaction with all school staff. Corona disease and all-virtual training have taken away this opportunity from the interns.

"Despite my teacher's efforts and my efforts, the virtual internship still taught us practically nothing," says interviewee ۲۰. "I did not even see the principal closely." "As a student-teacher who is going to make the most of the four internship semesters, there was no opportunity for me to get acquainted with the work environment and colleagues in a virtual internship," says interviewee ۱۰.

۴,۱. Lack of familiarity with the school rules: Interviewees have experienced virtual internships in such a way that they have also been withheld access to school rules.

Interviewee ۷ says: "In face-to-face internships, students had to be in class on a specific day and at a specific time and in a proper uniform, and at least they learned how to deal with the school staff"; while they also learned about the school rules". "We're not really ready to go to class right now, and I think I should finally be in class for six or seven months,". says interviewee ۱۱. "We even heard the rules and regulations of the school only from others and we do not know them correctly."

۵,۱. Possibility of getting acquainted with the student-teachers' place of work in the future: The participants acknowledged that in the virtual internship, due to the ban on the traffic and the virtual nature of University education, the student-teachers are allowed to receive the internship notifications at their main place of work in the future.

The interviewee ۱ says: "My place of work was one of the cities of Isfahan province, not Isfahan city itself, and this made me get acquainted with the conditions and the educational district of my place of work." Interviewee ۳ says: "We inhabitants of the city went to schools for the internship where we once studied; "It was a great feeling to go to a place where you want to serve later, for the internship." The interviewee ۱۹ says: "The good thing about virtualization was that the University no longer insisted that we must go to some particular school; "It was really gratifying to have an internship at our place of service."

۲. Technology: Part of the student-teacher experience of virtual internships has referred to the skills of using technology. Most of the participants were satisfied with the improvement of the content production skills and the use of various software.

۲.۱. Improving the skills of electronic content production: The production of electronic content is one of the skills required by the teacher, which according to the experiences of the participants, progress in this skill has not been possible before, during the face-to-face internships.

"The only positive thing about this issue was that it left students who were not up-to-date, familiar with the production of electronic content and try to learn it," says participant ۳۲. "The strong point that can be considered for this event, is that maybe students like me, of course by force, are forced to move a little bit to produce content," says participant ۲۷.

۲.۲. Improving the media literacy: There are a variety of educational software and media to help to education, which, based on the participants' experiences, it has become possible to learn and use them in virtual internships.

"Maybe if it was face to face, I wouldn't be making a lot of progress in many softwares in the next few years," says interviewee ۷. "Virtual education led the country to progress in the technology, and the quality of our technology increased with virtual education, especially in the internship course. I myself became familiar with working with many filmmaking softwares and the like," says interviewee ۱۶.

۳. Teaching: All participants emphasized the importance of gaining experience in teaching internship and their experiences show various aspects of teaching in virtual internship.

۳.۱. Benefiting from the teaching of the other teachers: The student-teachers participating in the interview have mentioned that in the virtual internship, it has been possible to use the various teachings of different teachers, something that rarely has been happened in the face-to-face internship.

Interviewee ۹ says: "As a student-teacher or novice teacher who should have experience in all different fields and teaching methods and who should be able to use a variety of teaching methods, this can be described as an opportunity in which we could even use the teaching

of the different teachers, even in the different cities". Interviewee ۱ says: "For example, I personally collected all these teachings for myself for a year while I was in this group, I have compiled a complete math tutorial for myself". "I made a booklet and wrote everything, and I made the most use of this internship, and that I was able to master a lot more on mathematics." Interviewee ۲ says: " The biggest advantage, if I may say so, was that in addition to having one guiding teacher, I myself was a member of several guiding teachers in the class, and the guiding teacher himself/herself used the teaching of the rest of the teachers, and that was how we could use the experiences of several teachers simultaneously, and I think that was one of the biggest benefits of the virtual internship."

۲,۳. Benefiting from the teaching of the guiding teachers at any time: According to the experiences of the participants, in the virtual internship it was possible to use the guiding teachers' teaching at different times.

"In the face-to-face internships, we went to the class only for one day and we supervised the teaching method the same day, however, in the virtual internship, we see and follow the teaching every day," says interviewee ۳. "Because the teachers' teaching was virtual and we were members of a channel or group, we could see the teaching anytime and every day, and now it was not limited to a specific day and time," says interviewee ۱۱.

۳,۳. Increasing creativity in teaching: According to the participants, virtual internships have increased the fields of creativity in teaching for both teachers and interns. "

There are a number of teaching methods that are creative and virtual space showed it to us, it means that with a series of creativity and electronic content, we can better explain to children, so that they would remain in their minds better and more accurately, says interviewee ۳۰." The advantage of being virtual was that we realized how much we could be creative in the virtual space. Being virtual made me look for more creativity and ideation, and to try to bring all aspects together," says interviewee ۹.

۴,۳. Archiving the teaching of guiding teachers: Student-teachers have stated in their experiences that it is easy to store teachers' material, content and teaching in the virtual space.

Interviewee ۱۹ says: "Of the benefits, I can say that you can access everything that is prepared in the classroom; especially to the teacher's teachings." Interviewee ۱ says: "Someone like me needs to be a little stronger in teaching mathematics, needs more repetition and practice, and now, no matter how many different courses he takes, he still needs to see the teacher's main teaching several times.". "I saved the video of my guiding teacher's teaching and watched it over and over again."

۵,۳. Lack of development of classroom management skills: All participants pointed out the weakness of virtual internship in developing classroom management skills and considered it as the biggest shortcoming of this education.

"A number of important skills, such as the method of classroom management and the like, could not really be learned from the teacher," says interviewee ۱۳. Interviewer ۳ says: "The

class with thirty students is very different from the virtual space. If there was a whatsapp group, the teacher would close the group if the children were doing something wrong. However, the real question is, what is the class supposed to look like? "Classroom management and scheduling were skills we needed to learn." Interviewee ۱۰ says: "The only things that were added to our knowledge were the teaching and the scientific part of the topics, however, we did not see the classroom management, we did not see interactions, we did not see the student activities, and we did not have the face-to-face classroom issues, and this also hit us so hard that we could not get full experience of the internship."

۶,۳. Lack of practice in all courses: Lack of teaching practice in all courses and also failure to use the teacher's teaching skills in all courses were some of the experiences mentioned by the participants.

"The next issue is that during the last year of the internship, I remember that when the teacher wanted to teach, the main thing was to teach math and he did not care about the other courses at all, so I did not become familiar with teaching of the teacher in different courses," says the interviewee ۳۴. "Unfortunately, most of the teachers left the memorization lessons to the students, and they only taught lessons like math and science, that's why we did not deal with teaching the rest of the courses at all", says the interviewee ۲۸.

۴. Internship structure: Another part of the experiences expressed by the participants refers to the items that can be considered as a subset of the internship structure. Items such as the time of the lesson, course outline, report writing, and information and knowledge of teachers and principals about the intern's duties.

۱,۴. Increasing the time of the internship: According to the research participants, the past time constraints on the internship have been removed in the virtual training of this course.

"In the face-to-face internship, seniors only went to school for one day, however, we were members of the shād and whatsapp classes, and the time of the internship was no longer limited to one day," said interviewee ۱۹. "It was great that we could have used the guiding teacher and the classroom conditions for more days and times, it was no longer just a day and an hour," says interviewee ۶.

۲,۴. Inappropriate and incorrect reports and narratives: Some participants acknowledged that the internship reports did not have the necessary correctness and accuracy.

"When there was no mutual communication, students could not write the internship emotional report correctly, and sometimes they even wrote their report from somewhere," says interviewee ۱۰. "When writing the emotional and educational report, we worked very

hard to come up with something," says interviewee ۱۷. I reviewed about ۲۰ sessions of e-learning to finally write a report. "Finally, I had to copy." "Our experience of internship is purely theoretical and is limited to writing, that is, to write a report, to describe, to write a lesson plan, which we sometimes (but not always) downloaded from the Internet", says interviewee ۱۲.

۳, ۴. Lack of proper internship course outline in the virtual space: According to some interviewees, the existing internship course outlines were not suitable for the virtual training of this course.

"If the internship is going to go virtually, it's better to change the internship outlines, in the virtual internship, we were asked to do what we could do in the face to face internship, not in the virtual internship, and it is natural that this contradiction would make the internship useless", says interviewee ۷. "Everything the professors and the University asked us to do was for a time when the internship was face to face, I wish they would correct the outlines, at least for the duration of the virtual internship," says Interviewee ۲.

۴, ۴. Teachers and school principals' ignorance of the internship and intern duties: Justifying the guiding teachers and school principals that the interns apply for internship was another part of the student-teachers' experience of the virtual internship.

"Many schools did not have clear tasks, and as a result, school principals had incorrect expectations of us as the interns," said interviewee ۴. "It was very difficult for the guiding teachers to work with the interns, because it was difficult for them to keep asking us to do their homework and it might be considered private for them, and because these things had to be monitored by the principal, sometimes the teachers did not cooperate with the interns, and they only did the work by themselves or even, the teacher left most of the activity to the intern. It was clear that neither the teacher nor the principal knew anything about the intern's duties", says interviewee ۲۲.

Discussion and conclusion

The internship course has been included in the teacher training curriculum system as one of the most important courses that exposes the student-teachers to the executive realities of the school environment and confronts them with the practical situation of the classroom. The ۶۰-hour course, which is offered during the student's course, seeks to provide for the students the opportunities for the practical experience based on the theoretical knowledge. The executive conditions of the internship course are achieved with the guidance of the teacher and the guiding teacher and the educational coordination. Prior to the outbreak of corona disease, this course was conducted face to face with the predetermined objectives and in accordance with the educational outlines. However, with the Covid-۱۹ epidemic and the ban on face-to-face training, this course was also presented virtually. Due to the importance of this course and the lack of the studies around the internship course in the virtual space, in this study, the student-teachers' experiences of the virtual training of the

internship course were dealt with. The results of this study, which originated from the student-teachers' experiences of the internship in virtual space, show that students have been able to take advantage of virtual education opportunities for internship. For example, they have been able to save and archive the guiding teachers' teaching and their feedback, and according to the participants, this will be helpful in their future teaching in the real classroom environment and during their service. For this reason, one of the objectives of the internship which is linking the theoretical knowledge with the practical skills have been achieved. In addition to maintaining the guiding teachers' teaching, in virtual education, it was possible to use the teaching of the other teachers, and this has increased the scope of teaching experience for students. However, the previous research (research background) has shown low student-teacher skills in the teaching principles and techniques. This shortcoming, which has been raised in the previous studies, seems to have been somewhat remedied by the virtualization of the internship. The results also showed that students' technological capabilities and media literacy, especially in the production of the electronic content have improved. This is in line with the results of Hejazi and Bakhtiari (۲۰۱۸) that the ability of professors and student-teachers to use IT and ICT technologies were considered as the strong points of internship. This has not been discussed in the face-to-face internship and this positive result, which is due to the mandatory conditions of the virtual education, should be used appropriately in the face-to-face training. The participants also expressed satisfaction with the extra time available to them for the internship in the virtual space, and they cited it as an appropriate opportunity to benefit more of the classroom and gain innovative ideas for training. In addition, some of the student-teachers who participated in this study believe that creativity is more likely to occur in the virtual internship, and in some cases their creative ideas have been supported by the teachers and school principals. In addition to the positive points that were gained from the participants' experiences regarding the internship training in the virtual space, deficiencies and shortcomings have deprived this type of training from the required quality, i.e., deficiencies and shortcomings that have been mentioned in previous researches such as Almasi et al. (۲۰۱۹), Maleki et al. (۲۰۱۹), Hejazi and Bakhtiari (۲۰۱۸). The results of the research (research background) regarding the current situation of the internship indicate that the student-teachers enter the field of training more relying on the teaching knowledge than the professional skills acquired during the internship (Almasi et al., ۱۳۹۹). In this study, the lack of development of classroom management skills, which student-teachers considered an important part of dissatisfaction and lack of experience originated from this issue, has been considered as one of the main disadvantages of the virtual internship. This is so important that it had been mentioned in all the interviews. Another part of the participants' experiences goes back to the limitations of the virtual education, where it is not possible to interact face to face with the educational agents, especially students. This is while an important part of the teaching profession's skills is obtained from the face-to-face interactions with the educational agents, including students, which was not possible in the virtual education. It is necessary to point out two very important points in the interpretation of the obtained themes. The first point is that, from all the interviews, it can be inferred that gaining teaching experience, as mentioned in the objectives of the

internship course and the students expected from this course, has not been achieved in the virtual training. The second point is that from the interviews with the participants, it can be understood that the guiding teacher and the school principal have more important role in the virtual training process than the face-to-face training. The discrepancies among the interviews showed that familiarity with the various teaching skills and gaining more experience on the learning environment is highly dependent on the guiding teacher and school management. Therefore, it is suggested that the internship course outlines be modified in such a way that in the future this course can be followed, both in the context of face-to-face training and in the context of virtual training, to use the opportunities mentioned earlier about the internship virtual training. It should be noted that the inadequacy of the outlines and its difficult language have been raised in the other studies, including Hejazi and Bakhtiari (۲۰۱۸), and according to the results of this study, the need to correct internship outlines is still felt. Also, the need to select the compassionate and capable teachers, and to justify the teaching staff involved in the internship process, is one of the necessities to achieve the objectives of the internship course, which is recommended to be modified in the internship programs.

Resources

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