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ANALYSIS OF COMPUTING INSTRUCTION FILES APPLICATION IN SCHOOLS +

Abstract

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) is tasked with ensuring excellence in the learning process of young children while still promoting talent exploitation in correlation to their learning activities. Ofsted aims at involving slow learners, fast learners, children with learning disabilities, physically challenged children by creating a conducive and integrative learning environment. This project highlights the use of computer instruction files (formerly known as ICT), the benefits accrued, levels of application in both GCE and GCSE, challenges faced in the implementation of the project and the recommendations made to the national curriculum developers as well as the individual schools. Key to note is that pupils refer to years 1- 6 while students refer to people in secondary schools.

Introduction

A case study of 167 secondary, primary and special schools has been adopted for this Ofsted report in a span of 3 years in 2008 to 2011. Also the use of computing instruction files is both a specialty and across the wider school curriculum. The report reflects issues arising from the application of ICT in schools namely: curriculum and qualifications of Key Stage 4 and 6, staff professionalism where ICT is concerned, e- safety, application of virtual learning environments, resource availability and getting best value of the ICT application (Taylor 2001). Among the schools highlighted ICT was better adopted in primary schools as compared to their secondary counterparts with two thirds of the primary schools showing outstanding progress

compared to one third of the secondary schools (Mohanty 2006). Other challenges are that few students advancing to secondary school had the basic ICT knowledge to engage in ICT business later, inadequate or complete lack of ICT infrastructure such as computer, laptops and teachers tired with the workload of students.

Application of Computing Instruction files

Schools adopting ICT were seen to have a comparative advantage over their counterparts which do not among the Key Level 4 and 6 pupils considered, it was evident that it increased their creativity levels with some embracing and arranging music using computers through the virtual learning environment (Mohanty 2006). Slow learners were seen to get fluent with use of computers almost as fast as the fast learners. Children with autism and Down's syndrome responded dramatically well to ICT application files where the respective schools made specific modifications on the program to handle their learning experience (Meadows 2000). A positive response came with ICT being encouraged among boys in a bid to make them embrace learning English. Their schools encouraged them by providing them with laptops which made them engage in active writing. Among Key Level 2, 4 and 6, ICT was seen to be instrumental in learning of science subjects among both girls and girls.

Recommendations

For almost complete of the ICT program in schools and in light of the challenges and applications highlighted above, Ofsted recommends that pupils know how their progress on ICT by continuous assessments, ensure that they have complete ICT curriculum relevant to their needs within and

without the classroom, evaluate the costs and benefits realized when establishing collaborative specialist services in commissioning and procurement in ICT in all levels, make e-safety a priority in curriculum development (Meadows 2000). In secondary schools, a range of ICT courses in Key Stage 4 relevant to the students' needs are to be provided, encouraging girls to continue with ICT beyond 14 and 16. The end effort would be to ensure that all students are able to benefit from the use of appropriate use of ICT across all levels and subjects (Taylor 2001). Primary, secondary and special schools should be provided with the necessary ICT infrastructure to ensure the goals set by Ofsted are realized.

References

Meadows, J 2000, Teaching and Learning with ICT in the Primary Schools, University of California Press, Chicago.

Mohanty L 2006, ICT Strategies for schools: A Guide for School Administrators, Kansas Press, CA.

Taylor, PH 2001, Managing ICT in the Secondary Schools, Oxford University Press, London.