

The use of ict in teaching education essay



Introduction

The purpose of this paper is to share with the readers the findings of a study to investigate the prospective teaching behaviours with ICT integration at secondary level. This study seeks to investigate the likely attitudes of teachers towards the use of ICT for educational purposes if equal access is given to them. ICTs is expected to boost the classroom but given that human beings generally show resistance to change, it is imperative to focus on teacher's motivation and readiness to use ICT in teaching.

Background and Objectives of the Present study

Technology is claimed to be a universal language and is regarded as one of the influential agents of globalisation. On the global front, ICT is already creating new, open learning environments and in the local context, the present government has announced in the latest budget, that classrooms will be equipped with ICT support and that teachers will be expected to use innovative teaching strategies, more precisely ICT for teaching. Furthermore, during the recent years, the government has embraced the vision of metamorphosing Mauritius from an agricultural island to a cyber island.

In line with this vision, teachers are expected to play a catalysing role in this transformation process. According to Murray, 2007, the use of technology in education is an emerging field of study as it involves the introduction of new instructional possibilities. Consequently, the aim of this study has been to focus on the factors which encourage the uptake of ICT by teachers as well as the barriers which prevent teachers from making full use of ICT in teaching.

Related Literature Review

In developing countries, education is seen as the hope of the future and massive investment is done in this sector as it is expected to bring economic progress while simultaneously ensuring sustainable development.

3. 1 The use of ICT in Teaching

According to a UNESCO handbook in 2005, researchers claim that to “ be effective, especially in developing countries, ICT should be combined with more traditional technologies such as books and radios and be more extensively applied to the training of teachers.” Consequently, the International Education Studies journal, May 2010 highlighted that teachers’ attitudes levels towards the use of ICT had a direct relation with the use of ICT for educational purposes and similar findings were reported by Albirini (2004) and Isleem (2003)

Perraton et al. identified two sets of activities or roles which should be considered to integrate ICT in education which are the need for the training of teachers to learn about ICT and its use in teaching and the need to provide teacher education. (2001)

Thus, in many countries, ICT is now at the center of education reforms that involve (i) its use in coordination with changes in curriculum, (ii) teacher training, (iii) assessment and (iv) pedagogy.

In the local context, Mauritius is also following the same trend since ICT is playing role in its education reform efforts. There are expectations that there will be much ICT investment in the education sector but according to a survey by S. Ramessur Seenarain, ICT is perceived as a mere learning tool.

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Attitudes towards the use of ICT

Many factors influence the use of ICT in teaching and one of these factors is teachers' attitudes towards the use of ICT in the teaching and learning process. Huang and Liaw

(2005) state that teachers' attitudes are important factors which support the use of computers in teaching. Much literature review focuses on attitudes of teachers as central to the integration or consequent rejection of ICT in teaching. Consequently, a number of studies have been carried out to investigate teachers' attitudes towards computer use. Albirini (2004) investigated the attitudes of teachers in Syrian high schools regarding the use of ICT in teaching and he found out that in general teachers had positive attitudes toward technology use in education. However, given the ambivalent nature of human behaviour, teachers' attitudes can help to determine their reaction in some situations. Fishbein (1967) defined attitude as a learned tendency which makes us react to an object or class of objects in a positive or hostile way. Similar claims were made by Ajzen in 1988.

Cuban (1993) classified teachers as (i) technophile; those who are enthusiastic about new technology, (ii) preservationist; those who hold traditional views regarding the use of ICT and (iii) cautious optimist; namely teachers who exhibit slow, steady movement towards fundamental changes in teaching.

Evans-Andris (1995) used corresponding classifications of teachers as showing (i) technical specialisation; those who embrace computers and view technology as a challenge, (ii) avoidance; teachers who distance themselves

from computers and (iii) integration; those who embrace computers in teaching. Teo (2006) put forward the argument that, “ the success of student learning with ICT will depend largely on the attitudes of teachers and their willingness to embrace the technology.

Van Braak (2001) also highlighted the strong correlation between computer associated attitudes and the use of ICT in teaching. Van Braak, Tondeur, & Valcke, (2004) mentioned that positive computer attitudes are likely to promote computer incorporation in the classroom. Akbaba & Kurubacak, 1998; Clark, (2001) further mentioned that attitudes toward computers influence teachers’ recognition of the effectiveness of technology, and also determine whether teachers integrate ICT into their classroom