

TECH-CHERS: UP TO SPEED OR LAGGING BEHIND?

by:
Shirley E. Napana

Despite of almost a decade of the implementation of the K to 12 Senior High School Curriculum, the Philippine Education system is still facing challenges. In addition to the never ending concerns on the significance of having additional two years in the basic education of secondary graduates, questions as to how equipped the teachers are not just on the subject matter they are assigned to teach but how they can cope with fast changing new world of 21st Century digital learners.

In line with these challenges, the Department of Education exerts effort to prepare its teaching force as they venture into a new world of teaching and a new generation of students. Seminars, mass trainings, are conducted almost simultaneously to give additional learnings as to the different pedagogies on ICT integration in executing their tasks in the four walls of the classroom. In the province of Bataan, the local government supports this by providing resources including gadgets and platform access and other similar technologies.

In education, technology was never invented as an extension of the chalkboard or the textbook. ICT integration in teaching must not be limited to encoded notes on slides and flashing them in front of the students but be more on interactive learning. It may include audio and visual presentations through music and films. Teachers who actively engage their students in computer and internet technology as part of the curriculum report that their students have improved test scores, better scores and increased self-esteem and self-confidence (Miller, 1999). The use of certain software and applications will make them more ready as they face new challenges upon graduation in Senior High

School, following the DepEd's goal for these students to be "Handa sa Trabaho, Handa sa Kolehiyo, Handa sa Negosyo." ICT should not drive education, rather educational goals and needs must drive its use in schools.

But despite these, concerns on teachers' readiness on ICT integration in teaching are inevitable especially that we have a large percentage of the seasoned SHS teachers. A study on teacher educators revealed that younger teachers were more open to ICT use, while some senior educators questioned its rationale. Major barriers included inadequate equipment, high workloads, and limited training (Ngao et al., 2022). A study in Indonesia identified four key factors influencing ICT integration: teachers' ICT skills, availability of official training, institutional support, and personal attitudes. Most teachers required additional training to optimize their ICT usage (Champa et al., 2019). Adapting to these will take time and effort to make this a successful one. In a study in by Andres et.al (2021), it was found that teachers who demonstrated a high level of adaptability also had high teaching performance. This highlights the need for educators to be flexible and continuously upgrade their skills in response to rapid technological changes.

At the end of the day, one of the key determinants of the success or lack of success of any ICT initiative in education is the teacher. By embracing innovative tools and methodologies, educators can create dynamic, inclusive, and future-ready learning environments that empower students to thrive in an ever-evolving world.

References:

Miller, B. (1999). Opinions of teachers regarding the effects of educational technology in the elementary classroom. Retrieved from <https://www.semanticscholar.org>

Ngao, A. I., Sang, G., & Kihwele, J. E. (2022). Understanding teacher educators' perceptions and practices about ICT integration in teacher education programs. *Education Sciences*, 12(8), 549. <https://doi.org/10.3390/educsci12080549>

Champa, R., Rochsantiningih, D., & Kristiana, D. (2019). Teachers' readiness indicators on ICT integration into their teaching. *Budapest International Research and Critics in Linguistics and Education (BirLE) Journal*. <https://doi.org/10.33258/birle.v2i4.508>

Andres, L., Cruz, J., Gonzaga, M. P., Rodríguez, I. S., Sanchez, J. A., & Ortiz, A. F. (2021). Teachers' level of adaptability and performance: Their response to the rapidly transforming academic world. *International Journal of English Literature and Social Sciences*. <https://ijels.com/10.22161/ijels>