ADDRESSING THE ISSUES AND CHALLENGES ON ICT-BASED INSTRUCTIONS

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Information and Communication Technology plays vital roles in the teaching and learning process and it has become widely accepted in the recent years. It is an instrument that can change the traditional learning process concept to promote quality education. Likewise, in this modern era, the use and application of ICT-Based Instruction is truly significant, the pupils/students could have the opportunities to develop and apply their skills as the 21st century learners. Moreover, it is evident that the government through the Department of Education has an initial step to help every school in developing the 21st century skills among learners through the implementation of the DepEd Computerization Program (DCP). The program supports the importance of enhanced basic education services through improved quality teaching and learning using ICT integration in the classroom instruction. This program primarily aims to provide public schools with appropriate technologies that would enhance the teaching-learning process and be able to meet the challenges of the 21st century. The schools will receive computer laboratory packages to integrate ICT in the school system and likewise raise the ICT literacy of learners, pupils, students, teachers, and the school heads. Hence, despite the implementation of this program, there are still numbers of schools without ICT facilities or E-classroom facilities. ICT-Based instruction was not yet fully implemented due to the issues and challenges encountered by the schools and the teachers. Moreover, Dawes (2001) stated that new technologies have the potential to upkeep education across the curriculum and deliver opportunities for efficient student-teacher communication in ways not possible before. He also added that ICT in teaching has the potential in
transforming teaching. As perceived by many, the application of ICT in teaching is truly significant not just in the educational system but as well as in the society. Consequently, the expected potentials that these technologies can bring will not be realized due to the issues and challenges encountered by the schools, teachers, and the learners. Identifying the possible issues and challenges encountered by the teachers on the implementation of ICT-Based Instructions will be an important step to improve the quality of teaching and learning using the ICT. Based on the survey conducted by the writer, below are the list of issues and challenges encountered by the school on the implementation of ICT-Based Instructions that must be addressed.

Lack of E-Learning Facilities

One of the major problems of some public schools is the absence of E-Learning facilities. Most of the schools do not have sufficient space to build rooms intended solely for E-classrooms. Most of the recipients of the DepEd Computerization Program (DCP) installed their computer units in the rooms intended for academic use. Moreover, ICT-Based instruction was not properly implemented and realized due to this issue. The existence of the E-learning materials such as computer units will not be used effectively if not properly installed into its intended rooms. The big question is, how can small schools with limited spaces solve this kind of issue or challenge in order to realize the real purpose and goal of the implementation of ICT-Based instructions in their respective schools?

Insufficient Computer Units and Interactive White Boards or Projectors

The ideal ratio of pupil to computer is 1:1. Pupils may learn effectively using the ICT-based instructions if they have personal contact or manipulation of the computers. Unfortunately, most of the recipient schools of the DCP still have insufficient number of computer units. Hence, E-learning process could not be possible or could not be implemented properly if there is insufficient E-learning materials particularly computer
units and interactive whiteboards or projectors. In the K to 12 curriculum, ICT integration in different subject areas are very common. Like for instance in teaching Arts, and TLE, there are lessons that really need computer units to be able to achieve the objectives of the lessons.

Lack of other Supporting Materials

One of the counterpart requirements of every school as the recipients of the DepEd Computerization Program is to provide sufficient tables and chairs designed solely for the E-classroom facilities. To be specific, the schools need to provide 50 monoblock chairs and customize tables for the computer units. Unfortunately, most of the recipient schools do not have these supporting materials for the effective implementation of ICT-Based instructions. Without the appropriate tables and chairs, pupils will be having difficulties in absorbing the lessons while in the E-classrooms. In the actual scenario, most of the recipient schools under Deped Computerization Program received the E-learning packages without the existence of their E-learning facilities and other supporting materials.

Limited Accessibility and Poor Internet Connections

We cannot deny the reality that there are still number of schools which have experienced limited accessibility and poor internet connections specially schools located in the up-land and coastal areas. Likewise, there were also schools which do not have internet connections yet maybe because of the source of fund to be incurred in the installation of internet and payment of the monthly bills. As perceived by many, internet accessibility could contribute a lot in the successful implementation of ICT-Based Instructions. Since we are now living in the digital era, school reporting, transactions are usually done through online communication. The existence of the computer packages will be more beneficial if every school has internet connections.
Lack of Teachers’ Competency on ICT

In the real scenario, lack of teachers’ competence on the use of ICT is also one of the major problems. The existence of the E-classrooms and the provision of e-learning materials will be useless if the facilitators of learning do not know how to manipulate these means for the improvement of the teaching and learning process. Some teachers lacked the knowledge and skills in using computers and were unenthusiastic about the changes and integration of supplementary learning associated with bringing computers into their teaching practices. This problem might be addressed through training-workshops that could either be done within the school, district, or even in the division level.

The identified issues and challenges on the implementation of ICT-Based Instructions must be addressed to achieve the real purpose of the Information and Communication Technologies. The school administrators may create plans and other programs to settle the challenges through the help and cooperation of the teachers, parents, pupils and other stakeholders.

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