BRIDGING THE DIGITAL GAP AMONG TEACHERS

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Technology plays a vital role in almost all aspects of education. It provides many opportunities for learning. It accelerates, enriches and improves basic skills. Tedla (2012) states that new technologies have the potential to promote and transform teaching and learning processes. He further asserts that ICTs also provide effective teaching learning atmosphere by providing opportunities for effective communication between teachers and learners. According to Ferrero (2002), the present young people, the so called ‘Net Generations’ usually adapt quickly to technology and are considered master the technological devices better than adults. These results to a worldwide changes taking place in the teaching learning process towards the use of ICT tools.

Despite these advantages brought by technology there are still teachers who do not integrate it to teaching-learning process especially teachers who have been in the profession for many years. Sang et al (2010), Tedla (2012), Tay (2011) identify the barriers that impede the integration of ICT. Lack of confidence is a barrier that prevents teachers from implementing it. Also, Tedla (2012), Bingimlas (2009) assert that another barrier related to lack of confidence is lack of competence in teachers. Lack of technological knowledge and skills to use it prevent teachers from implementing ICT in their teaching activities. Another factor is the resistance to change and negative attitude. Change is commonly not an easy thing that will take place smoothly because it is something unusual or frightening. Old teachers who are comfortable with the traditional way of teaching do not want new and innovative methods of teaching. They are stuck with face-to-face teaching and teacher centered methods of teaching which give them sense of power in front of their learners (Makato 2012:109).
In a journal published online entitled “11 reasons teachers aren’t technology #edchat #edtech”. The number 1 reason was identified as fear. According to the journal implementing new technology can be frightening on so many levels. Whether it’s a fear of letting go of control or a sense that one doesn’t have right skills or a concern about digital footprint, privacy or cyber-bullying, many teachers are simply scared.

Furthermore, in Deped Order 35. s.2016 also known as Learning Action Cell (LAC) as a K-12 Basic Education Program School-Based Continuing Professional Development Strategy for the Improvement of Teaching and Learning, one of the specified possible topic is the 21st Century skill and ICT integration in Instruction and assessment. Bringing 21st century skills into the teaching and learning situation is a central feature of the K-12 Basic Education Program.

This digital gap should be addressed by giving teachers opportunities to cope with the changes in the modern times. This way teachers will enrich lessons with simple integration strategies utilizing ICT that are developmentally appropriate. Instruction and assessment processes can be made more collaborative with ICT, which teachers can implement with the tools and equipment available in the school.

References:
