TECHNOLOGY PREPARATION PROGRAM FOR TEACHERS

by:
Michelle Serenas Nebrija
Teacher III, Balon Elementary School

The third millennium is known for its rapid technological development. At a young age, children already have mobile gadgets, and they can even learn to use them without their parents’ guidance. Indeed, most youngsters have outdone the elderly when it comes to using tech; they could adapt to any upgraded technology. Hence, the call for educators to achieve a certain level of technological competency is needed to help these children achieve a greater competitive edge once they go out into the world.

While students come and go, teachers continue to stay in schools for years and educate different student populations. Their role in technology implementation and effectiveness as “key variables”. The impact of technology on an educator’s skills and practices should be as equally important as evaluating its effect on a student (Fulton, 1998). Therefore, it is correspondingly vital to help teachers adjust to the ever-changing landscape of technology than merely training them to use sophisticated tech. In relation to this, having a technology preparation program in educational systems is an option.

Kozak (1992) determined that a suitable preparation program should be “an adaptive and open system” that is well segregated and dynamic, one that offers “a continued renewal process that leads to continuous learning”. The involvement of a preparation program would allow educators to be fluid and ongoing; they would be able to change and adapt along with technology.

Perhaps, the lack of technology preparation programs in the Philippine education system contributes to the challenge in technology adoption and proficiency of teachers. Brzycki and Dudt (2005) of the University of Pennsylvania identified the barriers to
technology adoption: support, time, culture, models, and infrastructure. They emphasized that having multiple forms of support (eg. incentives, government funding) tied with desired outcomes will help integrate technology into a teacher preparation program.

In the USA, the Madison School District immersed their faculty and staff into the Classroom Application of Technology – New Incentive Program (CATNIP). A total of 320 teachers participated and enrolled in the first five-hour training. They were allowed to finish the course at their own pace, and in exchange, they are rewarded with technological equipment for their classrooms. At the end of the first course (The Care and Feeding Your Laptop), each participant earned their own laptop (Ham, n.d.). Implementing this type of program in the Philippines could potentially motivate our teachers to be eager in learning how to mix technology into their teaching curriculum and delivery, however doing so would require an enormous amount of funding from the government.

Indeed, the future of our public education heavily depends on the amount of funding it receives. The Department of Education received a P521 billion budget for 2020, a 4% increase from the 2019 budget of P501 billion (Mateo, 2020). Hopefully, the budget will be allocated for programs that will promote a continuous learning environment for both students and educators to meet the global call.

References:


