

ABSTRACT

Teachers' Perspectives on their use of ICT – A Study of the Third Cohort of Graduates of the SEMP Diploma in Educational Technology

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This study describes the instructional use of ICT by a small group of graduates of an in-service Educational Technology programme. A mixed methods case study design was used to elicit graduates' usage of ICT since graduation; their explanations for their current use of ICT, and the influence of the Diploma on their professional practice. Data were collected concurrently via interviews and questionnaires. Attribution theory, teacher identity theory and Leavitt's socio-technical theory of organization change were employed for data analysis. The data were mined for descriptive statistics and theme generation. Mixed analyses enabled a deeper understanding of the post-graduation contexts of ICT use. Most graduates were hampered by lack of professional space needed to practice their new skills, as defined by access to resources and continued professional development. They perceived that they were marginalized within their schools, which were not prepared physically or administratively for the effective application of ICT in classrooms. The teachers responded to challenges by moving online, working within the limitations of their school or by not using ICT. The graduates engaged in behaviour that maintained their self-esteem. Disaffection was attributed to external factors and successes attributed to ability and competence. The disaffection stemmed from the perception of administrative intractability and non-preparedness of schools for their new skills. This study revealed that teachers' use of ICT cannot be explained in a decontextualized manner from their training and schools. Such information is invaluable to education planners who seek to foster the effective use of ICT in schools.

Keywords: Isidora Mitchell; attribution; teacher identity; Leavitt's diamond; ICT in classrooms; Trinidad and Tobago