

Analysis of Teachers' Preparedness for Digital Learning Integration in Public Primary Schools in Meru County, Kenya

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Abstract

Purpose of the Study: Digital learning integration (DLI) in the education sector has greatly expanded access to education with the teacher contributing significantly as an instructor. The contribution of a prepared teachers through training, equipped with technology and pedagogical knowledge and skills cannot be compared with those without training as change agents. DLI program is slow in public primary schools in Meru County amid claims that teachers are ill-prepared. This study analyzed teachers' preparedness on DLI before the program was rolled out in public primary schools in Meru County-Kenya.

Study Methodology; The study targeted all head teachers, teachers, sub-county Directors of Education (SCDE), PTA executive members, and learners from DLI pioneer grade. Ten percent of the schools were sampled using simple random sampling from where 912 respondents (67 head teachers, 496 teachers, 201 PTA executive members, and 536 pupils from DLI pioneer grade) were sampled. The sample also had 8 SCDEs purposively sampled. Descriptive survey design was used. Interview guide for SCDEs, questionnaires for (head teachers, teachers, and PTA executive members), and focus group discussion tools were used to collect data. Quantitative data was analyzed using IBM SPSS version 22 for social studies while qualitative data was reported in narrative.

Results and Findings: The results revealed that teachers were not adequately prepared through training since they were unable to undertake DLI effectively in the classroom. Few teachers were trained on DLI and no pedagogical skills were covered. There was no follow-up of the untrained and those trained were also affected by transfers, promotions, retirement or natural attrition. Further, there was no team work and collaboration between MoE, PTA, SCDEs, and head teachers on the management of the training and the program. MoE should ensure that all teachers were trained on digital technology and ensure there were measures to have continuous professional development in place to enhance teachers' practices

Conclusion: Teachers need a solid base of essential knowledge that can be obtained through adequate training. All teachers should be thoroughly trained or offered frequent in-service courses so that they can become competent in utilizing the digital learning resources in the most effective

way possible. The training should involve competencies in both the content and pedagogy, and done through long term professional development programs. Further, MoE should re-design the DLI teacher preparedness through training of serving teachers and teacher trainees who should take an examinable unit in ICT and corresponding pedagogy

Key words: *Digital Learning Integration, Pedagogical Skills, Preparedness, Management, Digital Learning & Training of Teachers.*

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