



A STUDY ON COMPUTER FUNCTIONAL LITERACY AMONG STUDENT TEACHERS

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ABSTRACT

Keywords:

INTRODUCTION

In India till recently computers were used only for storage and processing of data. In 1955, the first computer HEC - 2M which was imported from UK was installed at the Indian Statistical Institute. Calcutta. In course of time, the first indigenously designed computer system was installed at Jadavpur University; Calcutta in 1964 During the 1982 Asian Games and 1983 Non-Alignment Meet held in New Delhi, Computers were successfully employed. Since then computers have been installed at many places in the country. The explosion of interest in the use of computer in school thus followed from a variety of pressures. The cost barriers were disappearing, making hands on experience at reasonable cost a possibility. The educational arguments for a sensible approach to the inclusion of computer in a range of subjects and lecturing situations were becoming widely accepted.

COMPUTER EDUCATION IN INDIA

The computer literacy and education programme of the state government is likely to bring about a revolution in the field of school education. The students taking computer education as a subject of study at school level today will form the core competency group of tomorrow and lead India to the pinnacle of the computer technology world. The students of the future will help India make rapid advances in the competing world and will lay the foundation of a knowledge based society. Thus it is seen that in future computer will be a powerful new teaching tool for the teacher to make a departure from the monotonous world of black boards and chalk.

The teacher will be able to hold the students interest, and the students will also benefit largely. They will be able to explore information at their own pace, through audio and video means as well as from text animation. A simple example is that of dissection of a frog or rat, most commonly carried out in the early stages of learning biological science. Instead of dissecting a semi-conscious animal, the students now have the facility on a computer with voice-over detailing every aspect.

COMPUTERS IN EDUCATION

Indian experiments in taking computers to schools involved the participation of a large number of institutions for tasks such as the supply of hardware and software, the development of Computer Assisted Learning (CAL) packages, and the training of teachers. A project called Computer Literacy and Studies (CLASS) launched in 1984 was a joint initiative of MHRD, Department of Electronics, and NCERT. It covered 42 Resource Centers and 2,582 schools. It made use of microcomputers provided by the BBC.

The evaluation of the project by SAC revealed the need for greater interaction between resource centers and project schools, the need to reduce the time gap between the training of teachers, the installation of systems, and the initiation of activities in schools, the imparting of adequate hands-on experience to teachers and students, and the provision of computer literacy programmers in the timetable. The project had only a limited success, and has been described at best as a “spectator sport”.

Though all these interventions did make some impact, where the schools and teachers went the extra mile to avail of the facilities provided using their own ingenuity, many of these schemes have been half-hearted attempts even at the conceptual level. Computer literacy is not so much about knowing the technical jargon, but rather learning to use computers in a meaningful way, that is, meaningful to children.

EMERGENCE OF THE PROBLEM

As the world shrinks on account of developments in science and technology, these changes affect Indian society (and other countries, too) increasingly in many different ways. The world today is a global village, and this represents unprecedented challenges for Indian Education. No society can live in isolation. This reality has a bearing on social processes in both the world as well as in India. This process has been going on for some time, but in the last ten years the pace at which the world is changing is becoming greatly accelerated. Some special features of this changing world are Knowledge Explosion and Technological Explosion. Hence the problem exists based

on computer functional literacy in the school is most needed for the researcher.

IMPORTANCE OF TEACHER EDUCATION

The impact of teacher training on the quality of instruction in schools should be obvious. But, it will depend on the quality of teacher training programme. The ultimate aim of teacher education programme is to prepare effective teachers who are capable of bringing desired behaviour changes in pupils.

The individual qualities of teachers, their devotion and dedication to teaching profession and their commitment determine the classroom climate. It is recognized today that education is an essential process of social progress and national development.

For instance, the expanded function of education in India when it is directly linked to national development requires a broadening and depending on teacher's own knowledge and understanding. It also requires that the teacher see himself not as a prime source of knowledge but as an organizer of learning and learning experiences. This calls for a change in the concept of teacher education and consequent reorientation of the teacher education curriculum, both for enhancing the teacher's educability as well as his contribution to development.

Teacher education will have to find an entirely different focal point in planning and implementing the various aspects of its programmes. It may be emphasized that for linking teacher education to the problems of national development, the changes in the teacher education programmes have to be such as would yield immediate dividends rather than provide long-term answers.

COMMISSION REPORTS ON TEACHER EDUCATION

A thorough look into the various reports on teacher education shows that the quality of teacher is an important factor determining the quality of any educational system. The best-formulated educational policies can be successful only in the hands of properly trained teachers. "Destiny of classrooms is being shaped in departments of education and teacher education institutions".

Wood's Despatch (1854) emphasized the need for training teachers. It was suggested that teacher training programmes similar to the one in England should be organized for Indian teachers also. To encourage them to undergo this training programme, they must be given scholarship.

According to Hartog Committee of 1929 pointed out no system of education is successful without dedicated teachers. The committee felt that the condition of teachers was deplorable. Their salary was low, there was no security of service, there was no proper training for them, their social status was not desirable and most of them were not qualified. Without doing something to remove this situation, it was not possible to improve secondary education. So, the committee recommended to train teachers, their salary and service conditions should be

improved; steps should be taken to improve their social status and so on.

AIMS OF TEACHER EDUCATION

Since, the teacher has the responsibility for the total development of the child, education and training should lead to the inculcation of similar values and skills based on appropriate learning experiences. In other words, an intending teacher in addition to acquiring professional skills would do well to acquire the necessary knowledge, skills and attitudes so as to enable him to play his role effectively in bringing about the desired social change through education. The document of National Council for Teacher Education (NCTE), entitled 'Teacher Education Curriculum: A Framework - 1978', which claims to reflect the national consensus in respect of future teacher education in India.

ROLE OF COMPUTERS IN EDUCATION

Computers have changed the way we work, be it any profession. Therefore, it is only but natural the role of computers in education has been given a lot of prominence in the recent years. Computers play a vital role in every field. They aid industrial processes; they find applications in medicine; they are the heart of the software industry; they play a vital role in education. The uses of computers in education are manifold. Here, we shall discuss the important facets of the role of computers in education. The computer technology has a deep impact on education. Computer education forms a part of the school and college curricula, as it is important for every individual today, to have the basic knowledge of computers. The advantages of computers in education include an efficient storage and rendition of information, quick information processing and very importantly the saving of paper. Know more about the importance of computer education. Computer teaching plays a key role in the modern systems of education. Students find it easier to refer to the Internet than searching for information in fat reference books. The process of learning has gone beyond learning from prescribed textbooks. Today, aspirers can satiate their thirst for knowledge by means of the Internet. It is easier to store information on computers than maintaining hand-written notes. To know more on the subject, read about textbooks versus computer teaching.

Online education has revolutionized the education industry. The computer technology has made the dream of distance learning, a reality. Education is no more limited to classrooms. It has reached far and wide thanks to the computer technology. Physically distant locations have come close to each other only due to computer networking.

Computers facilitate an efficient storage and effective presentation of information. Presentation software like PowerPoint and animation software like Flash and others can be of great help to the teachers while delivering information. Computers can turn out being a brilliant aid in teaching. Computers facilitate an audio-visual representation of information, thus making the process of

learning interactive and interesting. Computer-aided teaching adds a fun element to education. Internet can play an important role in education. As it is an enormous information base, it can be harnessed for the retrieval of information on a wide variety of subjects. The Internet can be used to refer to information on various subjects to be taught to the students.

DEFINITION OF COMPUTER

A computer is a programmable machine. It allows the user to store all sorts of information and then 'process' that information, or data, or carry out actions with the information, such as calculating numbers or organising words.

FUNCTIONAL LITERACY OF COMPUTERS

Computer literacy is the ability to use computers and related technology efficiently, with a range of skills covering levels from elementary use to programming and advanced problem solving. By another measure, computer literacy requires some understanding of [computer programming](#) and how computers work. The rapid development and spread of technology, epitomized by the growth of the Internet, has made information and communication technology (ICT) very familiar to Finnish adolescents. For many, ICT has become part of their everyday lives. At the same time, the complexity and multidimensionality of literacies in the digital world have become apparent (see Heinonen 2006). Donald Leu et al. (2007, 37) describe this world as a "digital, networked, multimodal, and multitasking world of information and communication". Nowadays, it is common for adolescents to spend several hours a day with their computers or smart phones at school as well as at home (e.g. Suoninen 2013, 12-17; Uusitalo, Vehmas & Kupiainen 2011, 33-34) and even to use several media simultaneously in a form of multitasking (Herkman & Vainikka 2012b). The Internet has changed the way people communicate and act. It is easier than ever before to search and distribute information and publish one's thoughts, opinions, skills and knowledge. Anyone can put anything – texts, images, videos – of any kind on the Internet, and it is very possible that nobody checks the validity of the information. People on the other side of the world can chat in real time and music can be bought and downloaded to your own computer or smart phone. Information and communication technology has transformed media, the contexts and purposes of literacy practices, texts and the literacy culture as a whole.

CONCLUSION

The above findings are revealed that Computer Functional Literacy (CFL) of student teachers is in moderate level. Variables such as types of management, medium of instruction, computer knowledge and locality of the students are significantly differ in this study. Computers have made a dramatic impact on our society, particularly in the field of education. Computers are common tools in most schools, and are being used increasingly in all subject areas. Although some students are enthusiastic about

using computers, others may be more apprehensive.

In so far as computers aid learning and are common tools in the workforce, it is crucial for all students to become familiar and comfortable with their use. Successful computer experiences prepare students to participate effectively in a computer-dominated society. Computer experience alone is not the only precursor to student success with computers. Computer knowledge and attitudes also play an important role.

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