TEACHERS’ ATTITUDE TOWARDS INTRODUCTION OF COMPUTER STUDIES IN PRIMARY SCHOOLS: A CASE STUDY OF ZARIA LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA OF KADUNA STATE

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Abstract

This study was to measure the perception of primary school teachers towards introducing computer studies in primary schools. The study also sought the attitude of male and female teachers, experienced and inexperienced teachers on the matter under investigation. In order to carry out the study, three research question and three hypotheses were formulated and tested. A survey design was used. The sample for the study consisted of 80 primary school teachers drawn by stratified sampling technique from 5 primary schools in Zaria Local Government Area of Kaduna State. An Attitude Scale Questionnaire (ASQ) was used for data collection. Using means and standard deviations, the data were analyzed to answer the research questions. The hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance using t-test. The result of the data analysis indicated that majority of the primary school teachers showed positive attitude towards the introduction of computer studies in primary schools.

Background of the Study

A computer is defined as an electronic device with in-built programs which enables it to receive, store, process and produce large amounts of data for the execution of a wide range of arithmetic and logical operations (Akudolu, 1997). In other words, computer is an electronic device capable of accepting data and instructions, processing the data based on the instruction to generate results or output in such a manner that is yet to be equaled by any other known machine to mankind (Ifeakor, 2004). Computer is used in almost all aspects of human endeavour to improve the quality of life.

The use of computers is a new development in Nigerian education. Although computer is in existence in many organizations and many private computer-training programmes but not until recently there was no official policy on computer education in the country. Citing Okoro (1989), Ebe (1999) stated that it was in December 1987 that the Honourable Minister of Education inaugurated a committee to prepare the National Policy on Computer Education as well as provide guidelines and strategies for introducing computer education on a pilot scale in selected schools. In agreement with the rationale for computer education in Nigeria, Aleyijeino (1989) pointed that it needs no further elaboration to say that conditions are more ripe within the school system for the application of more extensive utilization of the computers for learning and instruction.

Several reasons are adduced to justify the introduction of computer education in Nigerian schools. Six major rationales classified as: social, vocational, pedagogical, catalytic, information technology industry, special needs and cost-effectiveness (Yusuf, 1998) have been proffered. The complexities of modern society have increased the demand for a better education. Abimbade (1996) went further to discuss the report of the committee on National Policy on Computer Education stating that it was agreed that computer should be introduced in primary schools that can afford to provide requisite facilities and resources. He enumerated the committee objectives for the computer education in primary schools as follows: The child should be able to:

- Use the computer and thereby acquire basic skills such as using the keyboard, accessing files and editing at the operating system level;
- Use the computer to facilitate learning; and
- Develop rudimentary skills in the use of computers for text writing, computation and data entry activities.

According to Gusen (1998) and Ifeakor (2004) the effect of computer in the society is so great that education cannot avoid including it for teaching/learning and management across
the school curriculum.

Abimbola (1988) noted that if computers should be used in Nigerian schools, as they would eventually be, teachers must become computer literate since no school system will rise above the quality of its teachers. Secondly, since teachers are the curriculum implemented in the classroom, it should be deemed necessary to seek their opinion towards the introduction of computer education in primary schools. Therefore the problem of the study posed as a question is: How would primary school teachers in Zaria Local Government Area of Kaduna State react to the introduction of computer studies in primary schools?

The purpose of this study, therefore, is to explore the attitude of primary school teachers towards introducing computer studies in primary schools. To guide this study, the following research questions and hypotheses were formulated.

Research Questions
i. To what extent does the attitude scores of primary school teachers towards introducing computer studies in primary school differ by gender?
ii. Which group, science or non-science primary school teachers have greater mean scores as measured by Attitude Scale Questionnaire (ASQ)?
iii. To what extent would the mean attitude scores of primary school teachers towards introducing computer studies in primary schools depend on teachers’ experience?

Hypotheses
\( H_01 \): There is no significant difference between the attitude of male and female primary school teachers towards introduction of computer in primary schools.

\( H_02 \): The mean attitude scores of science and non-science primary school teachers towards introduction of computers studies would not differ significantly.

\( H_03 \): The mean attitude scores of experienced and in-experienced primary school teachers towards the introduction of computer would not differ significantly.

Methodology
The design for the study was a descriptive survey. The sample consisted of 80 primary school teachers drawn by stratified random sampling from 5 schools in Zaria Local Government Area of Kaduna State. The stratification was based on gender, area of specialization and years of experience in the teaching field. A 21-item Attitude Scale Questionnaire (ASQ) was used for data collection. Two lecturers in computer education validated ASQ. The reliability coefficient was computed and found to be 0.81 using Cronbach alpha.

The 21 items were then administered to the subject by the researcher and all were collected back. Research question were answered using means and standard deviation (SD) while hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance using t-test.

Result

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>Degree of Freedom</th>
<th>t-calculated</th>
<th>t-critical</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Males</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>57.32</td>
<td>6.69</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>-1.087</td>
<td>1.98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>59.69</td>
<td>6.51</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1 showed that female teachers had a higher mean score of 59.69 with SD of 6.51 while male teachers had a mean score of 57.32 and SD of 6.69. Therefore, the female teachers demonstrated greater attitude towards introducing computer studies.

Table 1 also revealed that gender was not a significant factor in primary school teachers' responses. The t-calculated for gender was -1.087 against a table value of 1.98 for 78 of at 0.05 level of significance. Therefore, the null hypothesis of no significant difference between the attitude of male and female primary school teachers towards introduction of computer in primary schools was not rejected.
Table 2 showed that non-science primary teachers had a higher mean attitude score of 58.87 with SD of 6.86 while science primary teachers had a mean score of 58.48 with SD of 9.22. Therefore, the non-science primary teachers demonstrated greater attitude towards introducing computer studies in primary schools.

The t-test of attitude by area of specialization presented in Table 2 showed no significant difference in the mean attitude scores demonstrated by science and non-science primary school teachers. The calculated t-ratio was -0.0277 against the table value of 1.98 for 78 df at 0.05 level of significance.

Table 3 showed that non-experienced primary school teachers with mean attitude score of 58.81 and SD of 7.34 demonstrated higher attitude than experienced primary school teachers with mean score of 56.74 and SD of 10.89. It seemed that non-experienced teachers showed more attitude responses than experienced teachers.

As revealed by Table 3, the t calculated was 0.4915 against t-table of 1.98. The t-calculated is less than the t-table therefore we fail to reject the null hypothesis of no significant difference between the mean attitude scores of experienced and non-experienced primary school teachers.

Discussion

The results from the study showed that all primary school teachers under study showed positive attitude towards the introduction of computer studies in primary schools. There was no significant difference in their responses due to gender, area of specialization and experience. The findings of this study support the view of Ifeakor (2004), who reported positive perception of secondary school teachers towards the adoption of microcomputers for teaching and learning. Furthermore, this study is in line with Anekwe and Ifeakor (2004), who reported that the need to integrate computer studies into early childhood education must be urgently addressed by stakeholders.

Conclusion and Implication

The result presented and discussed in the foregoing section of this paper revealed that primary school teachers of Zaria Local Government Area of Kaduna State were in support of the opinion that computer studies be introduced in primary schools.

The results have implication for primary school curriculum, teachers and pupils. Primary school teachers should be computer literate so as to effectively teach the subject because nobody can give what he/she does not have. This could be done by organising in-service training for serving teachers. Moreover, all stakeholders - government, parents and philanthropists should provide as a matter of urgency computers and other media technologies to primary schools. The pupils should be given every opportunity and assistance for learning via computers.

References


