

Positive Influences of Integrating Information Communication Technology in Teaching English at a Technical and Vocational Training College

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Abstract

The paper investigated the positive influence of integrating Information Communication Technology (ICT) in teaching English to National Certificate NC (V) students at a Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) college. A qualitative research approach was used in this research to explore and determine ways in which ICT can be used in teaching English. The research's participants were fifteen NC (V) lecturers offering English. Semi-structured interviews and focus group interviews were conducted with Heads of Departments (HODs), Senior Education Specialists (SES), Education Specialists (ES), and NC(V) English lecturers. This paper found that there are barriers when it comes to integrating ICT in teaching English, and these were teacher-level barriers, student-level barriers, and school-level barriers. It is hoped that this research will contribute towards strategic ways that will ensure that ICT is integrated in teaching English at Nkangala TVET College, as this will improve students' class attendance and enhance teaching and learning.

Keywords: Barriers, Curriculum, Learning, Retention, Transmission.

Introduction

Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) colleges are regulated by the revised Continuing Education and Training Act (2006). According to Nkwanyane (2023), the South African Ministry of Higher Education and Training introduced the National Certificate Vocational Program in 2007. The curriculum for TVET colleges is divided into two, namely, National Accredited Technical Education Diploma (NATED), and National Certificate Vocational (NC(V)). The NC(V) curriculum is intended for students pursuing the National Qualifications Framework (NQF) levels two through four. The NATED curriculum is for those students who have completed matric from the Department of Basic Education (DBE). Students who have finished at least grade nine at school level may participate in NC(V) programmes. The National Certificate Vocational curriculum is critically important to make the qualification more relevant to the South African industry (Engelbrecht 2017).

The NC(V) students at TVET colleges lack communication skills. The lack of these skills affects their overall performance. Technologically, they can type using a computer, as most of them have smart cellular phones. It is always said that students who speak, read, and write well, will perform better in other subjects too. This study attempted to find out ways how the use and integration of ICT in teaching English to NC(V) students can assist these students in improving their command of the language.

This research focused on the barriers that lecturers faced in using ICT when teaching English for NC(V) students at a TVET college, and tried to find out the positive influences, as well as the challenges, associated with integrating ICT with their methods of teaching their students. According to Gaffoor (2018), factors influencing the decision to complete the NC(V) programme include, amongst others, financial assistance, progression to higher education, employment prospects within the vocation, well-informed career guidance, lecture support and patience, embarrassment about failure, parent and family support, and college environment compared to high school. The researchers ensured that through literature and consultation with the participants, the solution was reached, and NC(V) students' communication skills could be

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improved. It was the belief of the researchers that through ICT integration in teaching English, students' overall academic performance might be improved.

Objectives

The paper aims to achieve the following objectives:

- To explore the positive influences of integrating ICT in teaching English to NCV students at a TVET college.
- To determine lecturers' perceptions of ICT integration in teaching English to NCV students at a TVET college.
- To examine the barriers lecturers face in using ICT when teaching English to NCV students at a TVET college.
- To describe the challenges associated with the use and implementation of ICT in teaching English to NCV students at a TVET college.

Literature Review

This paper focused on the barriers that lecturers faced in using ICT when teaching English for NCV students at a TVET college, and tried to find out the positive influences, as well as the challenges, associated with integrating ICT with their methods of teaching their students. The researcher ensured that through literature and consultation with the participants, the solution was reached, and NCV students' communication skills could be improved. The researchers believed that through ICT integration in teaching English, students' overall academic performance might be improved. ICT integration could be an apparatus that can be used to gather more information for effective use in teaching English at a TVET college. However, this can only be achieved if TVET college lecturers are skilled in ICT usage.

The Role of ICT in Teaching English

For TVET colleges, the role of ICT is now perceived as massive and excessive. According to Onalan and Kurt (2020), teachers use technology for instructional preparation and instructional delivery, while students use it as an educational tool. For this reason, all teachers, including vocational technical high schools' teachers are anticipated to employ ICT in their didactic exercises (Khan and Markauskaite 2017).

ICT is seen as a tool to send information to students. Currently, ICT serves as an educational tool regardless of the different functions it provides to make peoples' lives easier. Ojo and Adu (2018) reiterated that from being a tool for technology for the information alone, ICT has changed to be a pilot of curriculum modernisation and a transmission scheme for both students and teachers.

For students, ICT acts as a motivational source for learning, providing opportunities for more effective communication and developing learning skills, including skills in analytical learning (Poudel 2018). It directs students' learning, thereby increasing their quality of learning. It is a beneficial tool for researching, composing, and responding in English. According to Shettar et al. (2021), incorporating ICT into teaching and learning makes learning more student-centric, as lecturers solely act as judges and mentors, giving students their undivided attention.

Karpova (2021) found that computer-assisted online tools for automated writing evaluation (AWE) help students develop and boost their practical writing abilities. He further indicated that the AWE systems are considered to have visible advantages when compared to correction and assessment by a human being. Students could test their writing skills and get immediate feedback. This feedback assisted them to direct and manage their own progress in learning. According to Palermo and Wilson (2020), the immediate and helpful feedback provided to students allows them to focus on different aspects of language expertise.

Ghufron and Rosyida (2018) maintained that corrective feedback educates students inductively by giving them constructive criticism and providing comments on their work. This enabled them to make self-correction and self-reformation (Karpova 2021). Zhang (2020) asserts that the AWE programmes save teachers from the burdensome task of marking students' essays. Employing ICT-based assessment minimises a lot of logistics and paperwork. Concurring with the above, Shettar et al. (2021) noted that ICT brings a radical change in the conduct of the assessment from manual to online.

According to Onalan and Kurt (2020), teachers use technology for instructional preparation and instructional delivery. They further stated that using technology for instructional preparation involves preparing classroom activities such as creating teaching materials, finding material resources related to the lesson, preparing presentations, creating an online discussion board on language teaching, writing lesson plans, or collaborating with peers. TVET college lecturers should infuse ICT into their teaching by engaging in teaching exercises and adopting an interdisciplinary method and integrated-skills approach. This approach promoted one goal of language acquisition which is to boost students' communicative competence.

ICT integration in teaching accommodates the demands of all students synchronously, as the apparatus can be altered according to the speed, intelligence degree, and necessity of the learners (Sabiri 2020). The inclusion of audio-visuals in teaching improved teaching and learning. This is because most students would better recall something that they heard and saw. Radianti et al. (2020) identified the benefits of using immersive virtual reality applications for higher education as intrinsic motivation, living experiences closer to reality, developing learning outcomes, expanded degrees of enthusiasm in learning, and enhanced abilities.

Challenges and Barriers to ICT Integration

Although numerous studies have demonstrated the benefits of integrating ICT to advance the standard of learning, this technology is not used in every lecturer's classes. There are still problems challenging its uses. Evidence has shown that for different reasons, lecturers usually do not fully employ the capability of ICT, such as the quality of equipment which can affect the teaching and learning process, and the lack of basic skills in operating the technologies. According to Wang et al. (2020), there are two kinds of barriers to ICT integration, that is, external, which includes shortage of time and assets, training, restricted technical assistance, and neglected technical difficulties, and internal, which demonstrates teachers' beliefs such as lack of confidence, conventional attitude, insufficient insight of the values of technology, commitment, and skills. Dinh (2015) asserts that extrinsic and intrinsic barriers are the two types of barriers to ICT integration. Insufficient ICT sources for lecturers, out-of-date software, inadequate time for preparing activities using ICT, and insufficient backing from management and the technical side are extrinsic barriers. Intrinsic barriers as found by Dinh (2015) are approaches and ideologies to technology, using ICT in teaching, and resistance to change.

Several studies showed a number of demographic variables that had been linked to lecturers using technology. Teaching experience (Mbambo 2017), gender (Islahi 2019), and previous experience with technology (Ifinedo et al. 2020) as factors that indicated ineffectiveness in technology usage.

In the context of technology use, teaching experience is quite valuable. Lecturers with a lot of teaching experience would experience problems when integrating ICT into their teaching as opposed to lecturers with less teaching experience. Teaching experience is also correlated with age, as lecturers with a lot of teaching experience are older. These older lecturers are used to the old teaching methods of chalk and chalkboard for many years, unwilling to change, while young lecturers with less years of experience in teaching, might be more anxious to incorporate technology in their instruction. This further implied that older lecturers have more difficulties integrating ICT into their teaching, compared to younger lecturers. Previous experience with technology had an impact on technology integration in teaching. If lecturers are familiar with technology, integrating it into teaching will not be that much of a problem.

Teachers' beliefs are one of the most important aspects impacting ICT integration into education. Regardless of the challenges of any technology, teachers must have the necessary abilities, skills, beliefs, and attitudes to implement it in the classroom (Spiteri and Rundgren 2020). For ICT to be effectively integrated into teaching English at a TVET college, lecturers need to adopt positive beliefs about it. When lecturers retain a favourable mentality towards ICT and its incorporation in bettering students' achievement in learning English, ICT success will be more assured. This idea is supported by a study carried out by Nelson and Hawk (2020) that disclosed that beliefs about the usefulness of technology were discovered to be a significant predictor for technology use. Nonetheless, if lecturers hold a low belief in ICT implementation in teaching, the ICT integration into teaching and learning of English will be unsuccessful.

Dogan et al. (2020) identified instructors' perceptions of their own competence for a particular technology as an important factor in determining how teachers use technology. They operationalised teachers' technology skills to contain capability beliefs indicating how proficient and competent teachers are in using particular technologies. This implies that the more positive beliefs lecturers have about a particular skill in using a particular application or software, the more likely they are to use it. More frequent use of technology in the classroom is connected with teachers' perceptions of their own competence or self-efficacy (Li et al. 2019).

The attitude that lecturers possess towards ICT usage has a significant impact on how quickly technology is adopted and incorporated. A study carried out by Mwila (2018) revealed that the frequency of ICT use and instructors' attitudes towards ICT integration are positively correlated. When teachers adopt a positive attitude, their desire and efforts to use technology in their lessons increases (Onalan and Kurt 2020). ICT integration into teaching depends highly on teachers' positive attitude towards its integration into language teaching (Khan and Kuddus 2021). This indicated that lecturers with a positive attitude towards ICT usage would integrate it into language teaching with ease as compared to lecturers with a negative attitude.

Access to and availability of technological resources including Web 2.0, hardware, instructional software, and the Internet applications are all critical to effective technology integration (Onalan and Kurt 2020). Availability and accessibility to technology negatively influence the lecturers' eagerness to merge improved or existing technology into their teaching. For example, if lecturers were using new technologies for the first time, they needed to have access to the computer room to practise and familiarise themselves with the new technologies before they could integrate them into their teaching. If they do not have access to the technologies, they will not be willing to embed them into their teaching.

Availability and accessibility to computer laboratories for English lecturers at TVET colleges is a major problem, as these computer laboratories are allocated for computer subjects, and not for English. Lecturers offering English must request free time from computer lecturers in order to use their laboratories. This is time-consuming as lecturers had to move from their classes to the computer laboratories and spend instructional time connecting and setting up the equipment. As a result, some lecturers do not integrate ICT into teaching English. This implied that TVET college lecturers need to be provided with enough technological accessibility and backing so that they can feel free and secure in integrating ICT into their classroom instruction. In a study conducted by Lasut and Bawengan (2020) concerning the effectiveness of ICT's integration in enhancing student motivation in learning English, it is revealed that though some schools have already provided ICT facilities, there were teachers who did not include ICT in their teaching.

One of the most valuable components of communication skills in language teaching is ICT competency. It is through ICT integration that information is shared amongst students and TVET college lecturers. However, most lecturers at TVET colleges do not have enough understanding and competencies to incorporate ICT into their teaching. As a result, they preferred not to use it for educational purposes. This idea is supported by Ojo and Adu (2018) who revealed that due to hindered knowledge and skills, ICT was not utilised in the classroom by teachers, regardless of having enough resources. Limited competencies and limited knowledge of ICT are the main aspects that influence the teachers' use of ICT (Hassan and Mirza 2021). Lecturers' competencies and knowledge of ICT needed to be improved. Therefore, lecturers at TVET colleges are required to empower themselves with ICT abilities and keep up with technological applications to increase their professional work's quality. Therefore, if English teachers are knowledgeable

about ICT and new educational innovations, they will be able to seamlessly incorporate 21st century abilities like teamwork, cooperation, creativity, critical thinking, and communication, which are essential qualities for educating English as a foreign language (EFL) today (Mohammad and Sandaran 2020).

Some lecturers are not comfortable integrating ICT into their teaching. This challenge might be due to the reason that they do not commonly employ it in their daily teaching. Mahdum et al. (2019) stated that the teacher who is an ICT expert is one who uses computers effectively in all aspects of their work, including teaching preparation, performing their teaching approach, evaluating and analysing students' learning outcomes, and conducting remedial or enrichment activities. Lecturers who are familiar with technology enjoy infusing technologies into their teaching, as they feel more self-competent and confident with the technologies that they are using, and also feel more open to testing and delving into new technologies. The more often teachers use ICT, the more knowledgeable and self-assured they will become (Hafifah and Sulisty 2020).

The TVET college lecturers are afraid that they might have technology glitches during the lesson, or make errors in front of students. As a result, certain lecturers will avoid using it completely. This requires colleges to conduct occasional training for lecturers on ICT usage. Constant engagement with technology boosts lecturers' confidence when teaching. Spiteri and Rundgren (2020) argued that one's level of comfort with technology is proportional to how much of it one uses.

Lecturers' Professional Development

The literature review has indicated that there is a problem with lecturers' professional development in TVET colleges, when compared to teachers in the basic education sector. There are no workshops or training aimed at developing lecturers in their profession. Lecturers do not receive any training on ICT integration into teaching. According to Naiker and Makgato (2018) in "*The Integration of ICT in TVET College Classroom*", there was no training for lecturers at TVET colleges, and no attempt was made to establish a plan for training new lecturers. Agreeing with this, Mbanga and Mtembu (2020) maintained that not all lecturers at TVET colleges were trained to use digital learning. Colleges do not take any steps to train lecturers on the pedagogical use of digital learning. As a result, ICT is not fully embedded into education.

Lecturers at TVET colleges need to know how to utilise the ICT tools in order to effect change in English language teaching and learning. Ramavath (2020) indicated that teachers require opportunities for professional development in order to improve their capacity to use ICT for formative learning assessments, individualised instruction, and gaining access to online resources. ICT integration into teaching English will only be a success when both students and teachers effectively use ICT tools in the classroom (Khan and Kuddus 2021). ICT training and workshops for English TVET lecturers would help in this regard. ICT can improve students' learning when teachers are computer-savvy and know how to incorporate it into the curriculum (Ramavath 2020).

To effectively integrate ICT and promote learning in particular content areas, teachers need to be able to employ curriculum materials that are technologically advanced (technological pedagogical content knowledge) (Voogt and McKenney 2017). However, with a lack of professional development at TVET colleges, lecturers are not equipped with such skills. To resolve ICT-related challenges and encourage improved ICT integration into education, especially in the teaching of English language, it would be beneficial for the institution and government to provide additional operational training in ICT and more policy backing (Hafifah and Sulisty 2020). Although most teachers have a positive perspective towards the advancement of technology for language learning, they lack the ICT pedagogy that they can employ in their classrooms (Febriani and Hafifah 2019). This indicated a dire need for professional development in ICT usage for TVET college lecturers.

Methodology

Phenomenology research design was suitable for this study. According to Creswell (2014), in phenomenology research designs, the researcher explains individuals' lived experiences about a

phenomenon as explained by participants. As stated by Rahman (2016), a qualitative research strategy necessitates an in-depth understanding of the human experience in particular holistic contexts. A qualitative research approach was used in this research in order to explore and determine ways in which ICT can be used in teaching English at a TVET college. Qualitative techniques helped in providing verbal descriptions that depicted the richness and difficulty of events that take place in natural environments from the viewpoints of participants (Mantshiyane et al. 2020). The researcher was able to capture people's actual lived experiences, resulting in a thorough and solid understanding of the phenomena (Lemon and Hayes 2020). It is through this qualitative method that challenges associated with ICT usage were identified and ways to overcome them were realised.

Sampling and Population

According to Sileyew (2020), a population describes the entire set of people (subjects or events) who share the characteristics in which the researcher is interested. The population for the study was 15 lecturers offering English to NC(V) students at three different campuses. Participants from these campuses were selected because most of the students in the college were enrolled in NC(V) courses at these campuses. As stated by Chai et al. (2021), eligibility criteria define the qualities that members of the population must have in order to take part in the study. In this study, participants were lecturers offering English to NC(V) students, as they provided relevant and more pertinent data required regarding utilising ICT in teaching English at a TVET college.

In this paper, purposive sampling was employed since it was suitable. It is the intentional choice of participants because of the characteristics the participants have. In this instance, the lecturers sampled in the study were experts in the subject. They were proficient and well-informed about using ICT in teaching English at a TVET college. They were capable of communicating their experiences and opinions on ICT usage in teaching English at a TVET college. According to Johnson et al. (2020), purposive sampling is the deliberate selection of study subjects in order to maximise the data source for addressing the study's questions. According to Etikan et al. (2016), by using purposeful sampling, the researcher is able to pinpoint the information needed and then look for individuals who can and are available to supply relevant information based on their experience and knowledge. Employing purposive sampling for the current study aided the researchers in getting knowledgeable participants who were able to provide useful data on the use of ICT in teaching English at a TVET college. As stated by Bradshaw et al. (2017), accessible participants are available through purposive sampling, but it also has the benefit of making it easier to choose people with the characteristics or backgrounds needed for the study.

The sample constituted 15 NC(V) English lecturers from the three different campuses of Nkangala TVET College. Interviews were conducted with five lecturers from each campus. Sampling lecturers from these campuses provided suitable, necessary, and more relevant data required regarding ICT usage in teaching English at a TVET college. These lecturers had been teaching English at a TVET college for more than five years. Individual interviews were also conducted with one head of department and one education specialist per campus. This was due to the management practice, skills, knowledge, experience, and understanding of ICT usage in teaching English at a TVET college.

Data Collection Tools, Procedures and Analysis

Kivunja (2016) defines research design as the method by which the study is approached, designed, and conducted in order to respond to the research questions. The designs are used as an overall plan to gather, analyse, and interpret data. In this study, semi-structured interviews and focus group interviews were used. Semi-structured interviews provided the researcher with detailed information about the participants' opinions or assumptions of the topic. As indicated by Groenland and Dana (2020), through semi-structured interviews, qualitative researchers collect and interpret a thorough explanation of the individuals' emotions, experiences, and viewpoints. In the focus group interviews a large volume of information was gathered within a short period of time. Focus group interviews also assisted the researchers in getting a deep understanding of how ICT can be used in teaching English at a TVET college.

Data was gathered using the semi-structured interviews with 15 NC(V) English lecturers because they interacted with students on a day-to-day basis. Individual interviews were conducted with one head of department and one education specialist per campus, as they were experts in the subject. An interview schedule was followed. For the participants to be relaxed and be able to express themselves openly, interviews were conducted in the form of a conversation. Sileyew (2020) states that the benefit of using interviews as a technique is that it allows respondents to bring up issues that the interviewer may not have anticipated. All the responses were recorded using a recording tablet. Summative notes of important aspects were taken to compliment the interviews. If there was a need, additional questions were asked throughout the process. Participants had the option to elaborate or offer more pertinent data if they so desired. It was important to record the responses during an interview for replay. This was done in consultation with the participants in order to protect their right to privacy.

Focus group interviews were used with groups of four to eight NC(V) English lecturers. The conversation was facilitated by using open-ended questions. The researcher ensured that a conducive environment was created where all members were engaged in the debate and the discussion was supervised. As indicated by Adler et al. (2019), participants in focus group interviews are free to narrate their own tales and voice their viewpoints without having to follow a strict set of questions. Participants shared their practices and points of view about ICT usage in teaching English at a TVET college. In this way, information-rich data about ICT usage in teaching English at a TVET college was collected. Flynn et al. (2018) maintained that focus groups produce an enormous amount of qualitative data and maximise participant-researcher face-to-face contact. Every response was audio recorded and notes were recorded as a backup system. Woolley et al. (2018) maintained that focus groups are considered to be less time-consuming. Moreover, it might be easier to discuss some delicate issues with a group than with individual interviews. It also assisted in exploring thoughts and feelings of the participants and not just their behaviour.

A thematic analysis approach was used to analyse the data. The semi-structured interviews were reproduced verbatim and then categorised and thematically arranged. Based on the study's objectives, the interview questions served as the basis for these categories and themes. For better capturing of data, the researcher repeatedly listened to the tapes and studied the interview recordings multiple times. This assisted the researchers in getting a better perception of the data and ensuring accuracy. Nowell et al. (2017) maintain that effective repeated reading of data, seeking for meanings and patterns, causes one to be familiar with it. The interviews were supplemented by summative notes of major aspects that were taken during the proceedings. The audio data was used along with these notes. Turale (2020) maintains that it is always preferable to collect and analyse data concurrently so that mistakes and omissions can be corrected as soon as possible. The data collected from each participant served as the main source for creating and managing concepts, themes, and categories. Data was analysed using different questions in each theme from the interview schedule.

Trustworthiness and Validity

Trustworthiness is the quality, correctness, and accuracy of the research findings. It describes the level of trust, or confidence that readers have in the outcomes. Bradshaw et al. (2017) argue that issues of trustworthiness, such as the values of credibility, dependability, confirmability, and transferability, are significant to qualitative researchers because they help to illustrate the quality of the data. To ensure trustworthiness, the researcher developed the guidelines and procedures required to be deemed deserving of readers' consideration. To achieve credibility, participants were selected using purposive sampling. They were selected because they had certain intelligence and proficiency in ICT usage in teaching English at a TVET college. Korstjens and Moser (2018) maintain that persistent observation, continued engagement, triangulation, and member check are strategies to ensure credibility. Credibility was achieved by engaging participants in the conversation and giving them room to tell a story in their own way (DeCarlo 2018). Follow-up questions were asked, if necessary, and the participants were urged to provide examples to back up their claims.

Transferability is an external validity that confirms the research can be generalised to a different context even though it is performed by another researcher (Sibisi 2019). Transferability of the study was achieved

by defining the background of the research to help the reader in being able to generalise the conclusions and administer them accordingly. Dependability affirms that results are specific to a given period and location, and that interpretations are consistent across data (Lemon and Hayes 2020). Dependability was achieved by recording the views of participants verbatim so that they were able to confirm that their responses were accurately reflected. Conformability outlines how strong the actual information gathered supports the research findings when scrutinised by other researchers. Conformability was reached by writing down the views of participants verbatim and in italics to separate them from the analysis and to represent the voices of the participants.

Ethical Consideration

Consent to take part in the study was requested and acquired from all participants, namely, UNISA ethics committee, and the Nkangala TVET College management and lecturers. To obtain permission to carry out the research, the researcher provided these parties with a short, explicit, concise, and accurate research profile.

As all possible situations that may arise during an investigation cannot be foreseen and ruled out beforehand, the principle of beneficence was observed as emphasised by Varkey (2021) to ensure the well-being of participants, who had a right to protection from discomfort and harm. Participants were assured by the researcher that they would not be in danger of harm to their bodies, mental distress and discomfort, social disadvantages, harm to financial status, exploitation, or any form of coercion during the research study.

Deceptive practices were avoided, and consent forms were obtained from all participants. The purpose of the research was extensively reviewed and thereafter, a consent letter was given to the participants to read, and sign voluntarily without any victimisation, whether or not to take part in the study. In this way the participants' right to self-determination was honoured.

The right to full disclosure was observed as the researcher presented an information letter to all participants, describing the nature of the research and the freedom of the study's subjects to participate or not. The researcher let participants understand why they were engaged in the study and what they had to do based on the research. This allowed participants to take part in the research without being lied to or bullied. As stated by Bradshaw et al. (2017), participants in studies must be treated as autonomous agents with the freedom to accept or decline participation in any study and to withdraw consent whenever they want.

Results and Discussion

The results from this research showed that there are negative and positive impacts of integrating ICT into teaching English at the Nkangala TVET College. When it comes to the positive influences of using ICT in teaching English, this study found that students were more engaged in the lessons. Furthermore, ICT usage in the classroom was found to foster students' collaboration and engagement in the classroom. Participant 15, Lec 1 mentioned that ICT has a positive influence when it comes to English language teaching. *"ICT is a good thing that can help our students and can motivate our students to make sure that they enjoy our lessons because nowadays students, our youth, prefer technology more than standing in front of them and doing the talking theoretically."* This is supported by Sibiri (2019) indicating that ICT integration caters the needs of all students simultaneously as these tools can be adjusted according to the pace, ability level and needs of the learners. ICT integration with pedagogy may widen and intensify areas and scope of quality teaching and learning (Naqvi 2018)

This was further found to improve lesson attendance and academic performance. Participant 7, HOD 3 indicated that ICT integration improves students' attendance, *"During the learning process is very much effective because our learners our children they like ICT when you speak of computer, laptops and online learning is what they love so it's good they like it they enjoy actually being taught online. In terms of integration, it works well with them because they are able to attend the lessons, they are able to make friends online, they learn what I can say, they socialise and learn at the same time."* This finding was consistent with a study that showed a positive correlation between ICT usage in the classroom and students' attendance and commitment (Dineva and Nedeva 2013).

This research also noted that integrating ICT into teaching English at the college comes with negative impacts. This study found that partly integrating ICT into some lessons results in poor attendance in the classes that do not use ICT. A reason for not using ICT in all the classes was said to be a lack of resources from the college and students. Another study found that the partial use of ICT was a result of the lack of resources (Ghavifekr et al. 2016). This study has found positive and negative impacts of integrating ICT into an environment that is challenged by a lack of resources. According to Aminullah et al. (2019), their schools did not have an ideal regulation towards the use of ICT, especially for English subject, and some schools also did not have enough ICT facilities to support the teachers' teaching and learning activity. The introduction on new ways of approaching teaching and learning always have positive and negative impacts.

“When teaching our English, I would say the problem goes back to shortage of equipment because if we have enough equipment and lecturers are trained I don't think there would be a problem” [Participant 10, Lec 2 campus A]. If teachers' attitudes are positive toward the use of educational technology, then they can easily provide useful insight about the adoption and integration of ICT into teaching and learning process (Buabeng-Andoh 2012).

Lecturers who participated in this study found the use of ICT as important, more especially when the students are young people who are fascinated by ICT. Though some of the lecturers have never used ICT in their lessons, their perception was positive mainly because of the benefits that come with it. *“I think of the use of ICT across the curriculum. I mean it is for a good cause because it advances the scope of teaching and learning for both the educator and the learner. Remember, we are in the Fourth Industrial Revolution where ICT is taking the capacity of everything. Most of the things become easier for the students if it is computer oriented.”* [Participant 12, Lec 7 campus B]. ICT should be used currently in conjunction with well planned classroom teaching (Bhasin 2012).

The results from this research showed that the failure to integrate ICT into teaching English by some lecturers was a result of accommodating students who did not have resources. A study has shown that understanding the various sorts of unique technology-mediated learning activities that students can engage in, as well as how these activities can be used for assessment, is essential for anybody involved in education and training in the 21st century (Bansa and Asrini 2020). Overall, this study found positive perceptions by lecturers in integrating ICT into their English lessons, and they were only deterred from implementing by lack of resources. *“We don't have computers for English and even and even those computers for LO, some are very slow they are not enough for the number of students we are having in this campus”* [Participant 14, Lec 5 campus B]. Interest was found to have a direct and positive effect, while anxiety had a direct and negative effect (Bai et al. 2021). This is an indication that some teachers are positive and willing to learn more about new technologies while others have fears of the unknown.

This research found that there are several barriers that affect the integration of ICT into teaching English at Nkangala TVET College. Among the barriers that the study participants mentioned, the most common was the lack of training and resources, which greatly affected lecturers' confidence to incorporate ICT into teaching and learning. *“The challenges, like I said, is that there is no training on our part, the lecturers are not given training, so that is a very serious challenge. Not knowing how to operate the computers and the overhead projectors, it is very difficult but if you use a phone it is easier because you are used to it”* [Participant 11, ES1 campus A]. This paper found that there are several barriers that affect the integration of ICT into teaching English at Nkangala TVET College. The barrier that the study participants mentioned the most was the lack of training and resources, which greatly affected lecturers' confidence to incorporate ICT into teaching and learning. Participant 14, Lec5 campus B stated, *“Training lecturers on how to use ICT in a proper way. And another thing most of the teachers when it comes to ICT our competency there is lack of teacher's competency because you want to do something you know. Today we are using technology, but they are trying. Today they teach you this, tomorrow you forgot what they were teaching you because you don't have enough time to practise.”* The attitudes of teachers towards ICT can influence adoption and integration of ICT if teachers have negative attitudes towards technology, providing them with excellent ICT facilities may not influence them to use it in their teaching (Lawrence and Tar 2018). According to Hashemi and Kew (2021), three main factors are found as the common obstacles towards the use of ICT in English teaching, which are, lack of teachers' confidence in using technology, lack of effective training and lack of time.

Literature has shown that the most frequently perceived obstacles were investment in time and training, technical problems, lack of resources, inappropriate use, insufficient knowledge, and loss of time spent on physical activity (Villalba et al. 2017). This is supported by Hamutoglu and Basarmak (2020) who assert that barriers constitute a complex structure that is encountered in almost every environment for different reasons and affects the teaching and learning process. Poor connectivity was discovered to be another barrier to the integration of ICT into teaching and learning in this study. The study noted that some of the lessons that the lecturers planned to integrate ICT were affected by poor connectivity, as there were some classrooms without Internet coverage. *“Like I have already said, poor connectivity at times you find that you cannot connect because of the internet coverage where you are.”* [Participant 12, Lec7 campus B]. Participant 4, Lec8 campus C stated, *“Uhm! The internet is the most stumbling block in our college because the students don’t have access to it. Uhm! I might have, as a lecturer or as the personnel, but not the whole campus has internet.”* This paper noted that lecturers who were part of this study expressed failure to deal with the technical problems. This affected their confidence to integrate ICT into teaching and learning. *“Ya, also my confidence is low because I am not an ICT specialist so we definitely need to be trained thoroughly. So that as a lecturer when you are standing in front of them kids you should know what you are doing and it boosts your confidence.”* [Focus Group Discussion, FGD1 campus C]. However, the male teachers had more positive perceptions of ICT and higher perceived self-confidence in integrating ICT into their classes as compared to the female teachers (Gandhi and Lynch 2016). This is an indication that teachers lack the willingness to collaborate and assist one another.

This research found that the lack of resources was not only from the college, but the students also lack resources such as smartphones or laptops to participate in lessons that integrated ICT. *“Some of them don’t even have smartphones, they still have old cell phones that can only make calls. They can’t even be on the Whats.App group, which is something as basic as that. Not to mention more other things that we need to do using smartphones or laptops also those who have been provided with laptops they still lack basic computer literacy they still need to be taught things like how do you open just your screen on the laptop and stuff like that”* [Participant 3, Lec 9 campus C]. According to Munje and Jita (2020), the lack of ICT resources frustrates the hopes and aspirations of learners and prevents them from enjoying the benefits associated with the introduction of ICT tools into the classroom. This is further supported by Ismail et al. (2020) who indicate that ICT integration in schools suffers due to the non-availability of ICT resources and lack of teachers’ relevant skills and knowledge and ultimately about taking measures towards these ends. ICT integration into learning environments is affected by five factors, namely, students, educational materials, infrastructure, management and teachers – ICT and pedagogy competence of teachers, students’ ICT competence, a lack of technical equipment and technical support, a lack of educational materials, the attitudes of school administrators, and the quality and lack of in-service training for ICT (Turgut and Aslan 2021).

Challenges Associated with Implementing ICT for Teaching English

This research found that there are challenges that are hindering the successful implementation of ICT into teaching English at Nkangala TVET College. The study participants expressed that one of the challenges that affected the implementation of ICT in teaching was the lack of backing from management. *“Uhm! After attending some uhm! College functions it is always said that the college supports. I think the college, they do want to support, the management, they feel that they are supporting, but I think more effort is required because the support they are talking about they don’t come to class maybe the senior management to see the difficulties that we are facing because if they can be hands on they would see that this has a real impact on our lessons. In theory they say they are supporting but practically so their involvement is very minimal”* [Participant 4, Lec8 campus C]. This study found that the management does not seem to have a clear plan on how lecturers will be trained and how resources will be procured and distributed. The top three hindrances were lack of teacher training, inadequate infrastructure, and the lack of technology resources (Alswilem 2019).

The results from this research showed that there are negative and positive impacts of integrating ICT into teaching English at the Nkangala TVET College. When it comes to the positive influences of using ICT in teaching English, this study found that students were more engaged in the lessons. Furthermore, ICT usage in the classroom was found to foster students’ collaboration and engagement in the classroom. This was further found to improve lesson attendance and academic performance. From Focus Group Discussion FGD1 campus C, it was stated, *“It makes lessons more interesting by using technology in the classroom.”* All jobs

depend on technology and it should be integrated into education to make education and learning permanent and competent (Kucuk 2023).

This research found that most lecturers regard ICT integration into teaching as a positive one. The study found that the lecturers who participated in this study found the use of ICT to be important, especially when the students are young people who are fascinated by ICT. Though some of the lecturers have never used ICT in their lessons, their perception was positive mainly because of the benefits that come with it. Participant 14, Lec5 campus B stated, *“It can improve student learning and it can help us lecturers with better teaching methods. Uhm the paperwork will be less Mem and then I think it will be easy to manage time for the students. You can assist them at any time, anywhere, it will depend on their availability. It can also help me with new teaching methods and it will also help the students because we will also be using new learning methods.”* ICT training will empower educators to transform their traditional modes of delivery into new modes of delivery (Assan and Thomas 2012).

The results from this research showed that the failure to integrate ICT into teaching English by some lecturers was a result of accommodating students who did not have resources. Focus Group Discussion, FGD3 campus A indicated, *“We want to use it as lecturers but you think about the students who are on the disadvantaged side because they don’t have the necessary resources.”*

This research found that the lack of resources was not only from the college, but the students also lack resources such as smartphones or laptops to participate in lessons that integrated ICT. Focus Group Discussion, FGD3 campus A mentioned, *“On the learners’ side, these learners don’t have these devices because one would like to use PowerPoint presentations. They don’t have the laptops or any other gadgets that they may use to view these PowerPoint presentations.”* Five key problems of ICT usage in teaching English, namely, teachers’ lack of IT knowledge, lack of ICT facilities, lack of self-confidence, lack of much time, and lack of willingness to change their teaching style (Simangunsong 2019). Furthermore, Champa et al. (2021) assert that the barriers of English teachers in integrating ICT are lack of ICT integration training, competence, equipment, and appropriate software and materials.

The research participants expressed that one of the challenges that affected the implementation of ICT in teaching was the lack of backing from Nkangala TVET College management. This study found that the management does not seem to have a clear plan on how lecturers will be trained and how resources will be procured and distributed. Participant 7, HOD3 campus C mentioned, *“The factor that I have seen influencing negatively in our teaching is the lack of training on the side of lecturers. Remember I will speak of language lecturers, language lecturers are teachers for languages, and they are not computer literate. In order for me to use ICT effectively I must have gone through an intensive programme wherein I have been trained to use ICT or the computer, so lack of effective training is a mammoth influence here.”* Literature also showed that lack of management support in integrating ICT into their lessons discouraged teachers from implementing ICT (Nelson et al. 2019; Raman and Yamat 2014). This is also supported by Ekberg and Gao (2018) who argue that it is time consuming to find plagiarism of students’ exercises and there is a lack of ICT training of digital resources provided by the schools.

Conclusion

This research has shown that integrating ICT into regular education is a very difficult task. ICT does not come without its share of challenges when it comes to supporting teaching and learning. It is indeed possible that neither lecturers nor students have the abilities needed to obtain, process, and utilise information. Even so, there are some challenges that operate as obstacles and hinder teachers from incorporating ICT into the classroom. This study found that there are barriers when it comes to integrating ICT into teaching and learning English and these were teacher-level barriers, student-level barriers, and school-level barriers.

Moreover, this research found that management support is important in implementing ICT for teaching and learning. Management support can potentially motivate lecturers to fully incorporate ICT into their classroom instruction. Most of the participants who tried to integrate ICT into their lessons using their own resources were left frustrated by the poor connectivity in some of the classes at the college. The majority of the participants had a positive perception when it came to ICT integration into their lessons. However, their perception was affected by a lack of resources, lack of training, and poor connectivity.

It is envisaged that this research will help with developing strategic approaches that will ensure that ICT is integrated into teaching English at Nkangala TVET College as this will improve students' class attendance and enhance teaching and learning. Additionally, it is anticipated that this research would greatly aid the college's administration and other stakeholders in identifying and eliminating hurdles that affect ICT implementation in teaching English and other courses at a TVET college. Many researchers have already done an excellent job in studying ICT integration in classroom instruction. The above assertions necessitate devotion, involvement, optimism, and genuine commitment from the DHET, the college's senior management, parents, lecturers, and students to guarantee that ICT is used in both teaching and learning.

Recommendations

The research's recommendations are based on the literature and data gathered during the research process on ICT integration into teaching English at a TVET college. The research showed that English lecturers at the college have a positive perception when it comes to integrating ICT into teaching English. However, this positive perception was affected by the existing barriers. ICT facilitates teacher-student interaction. It aids the teachers in their preparation for teaching and providing constructive feedback to students. The absence of an ICT implementation plan for teaching and learning contributes to the current existing barriers experienced by lecturers and students.

This research found that with an appropriate ICT implementation plan, most of the barriers faced by college students and lecturers may be controlled and removed. To address the barriers to integrating ICT into teaching English, it is crucial that the classroom is furnished with efficient ICT resources and that lecturers are trained to utilise them. This will boost their confidence to integrate ICT into their lessons. This study recommends that the Nkangala TVET college develops an ICT implementation plan that will ensure that the college prioritises ICT.

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