

ICT integration in Early Childhood Development teacher training Curriculum: Need to start from the beginning

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Abstract

Vision 2030 was developed by Kenya government as a roadmap for development. This aims to transform Kenya into a middle-income industrialized country and is anchored on three pillars: economic, social and political. This development is likely to be an illusion unless Kenya is able to achieve its educational goals. Education and training has been isolated in the vision 2030 as the only mechanism that will translate Kenya into a middle-income economy. The vision of education service provision is to have a globally competitive quality education, training and research for Kenya's sustainable development. Countries that have succeeded in harnessing the potential of ICT have been said to have taken a positive step towards a greatly expanded economic growth, improved human welfare and stronger forms of democratic governance. It is in this regard that the Kenyan government has invested a lot of funds in ICT infrastructure including digitization of educational materials through Kenya Institute of Education. This is geared towards the improvement in the quality of education. The investment is likely not to bear fruits unless the training of teachers is put on the forefront. There should therefore be an emphasis of training teachers in ICT because they are the central forces in tapping the learning potentials created by ICT. Teachers for all levels from pre-primary to university must be trained in ICT if the vision is to be realized. The quality and orientation of education at each level and the link with the demand for skills are critical for mastering technology. Although research has suggested that part of the difficulty in adopting innovation or reform relates to teachers themselves, it is important to find out the part that the government is playing in teacher preparation in ICT in teaching and learning. The purpose of this study was to explore the ICT skills possessed by the ECD teachers. Further, the study explored the integration of ICT in teaching and learning of preschool children selected in Kenyan preschools. A researcher developed questionnaire was used to gather the required information from the ECD teachers who were in their training sessions. The sample consisted of 395 pre-school teachers. The findings indicated that majority (60.83%) of the teachers had no knowledge in ICT. The findings also indicated that only 13.01% of the ECD teachers had attended any seminar related to ICT compared to the majority (86.99) who had never attended. All the teachers felt that their teaching would be highly enhanced by ICT integration in teaching and learning. Based on these findings, it was recommended that there is need for the government to invest more in the training of pre-school teachers in ICT integration.

Key words: Information Communication and Technology, Early Childhood education, Teacher Training, Integration