Factors Impacting Technology Integration in EFL Classrooms: A Study of Qatari Independent Schools

Authors : Youmen Chaaban, Maha Ellili-Cherif

Abstract : The purpose of this study was to examine the effects of teachers' individual characteristics and perceptions of environmental factors that impact their technology integration into their EFL (English as a Foreign Language) classrooms. To this end, a national survey examining EFL teachers' perceptions was conducted at Qatari Independent schools. 263 EFL teachers responded to the survey which investigated several factors known to impact technology integration. These factors included technology availability and support, EFL teachers' perceptions of importance, obstacles facing technology integration, competency with technology use, and formal technology preparation. The impact of these factors on teachers' and students' educational technology use was further measured. The analysis of the data included descriptive statistics and a chi-square analysis test in order to examine the relationship between these factors. The results revealed important cultural factors that impact teachers' practices and attitudes towards technology in the Qatari context. EFL teachers were found to integrate technology most prominently for instructional delivery and preparation. The use of technology as a learning tool received less emphasis. Teachers further revealed consistent perceptions about obstacles to integration, high levels of confidence in using technology, and consistent beliefs about the importance of using technology as a learning tool. Further analyses of the factors impacting technology integration can assist with Qatar's technology advancement and development efforts by indicating the areas of strength and areas where additional efforts are needed. The results will lay the foundation for conducting context-specific professional development suitable for the needs of EFL teachers in Qatari Independent Schools.