

The Impact of the Virtual Learning Environment on Teacher's Pedagogy and Student's Learning in Primary School Setting

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Abstract : The rapid growth and advancement in information and communication technology (ICT) at a global scene has greatly influenced and revolutionised interaction amongst society. The use of ICT has become second nature in managing everyday lives, particularly in the education environment. Traditional learning methods of using blackboards and chalks have been largely improved by the use of ICT devices such as interactive whiteboards and computers in school. This paper aims to explore the impacts of virtual learning environments (VLE) on teacher's pedagogy and student's learning in primary school settings. The research was conducted in two phases. Phase one of this study comprised a short interview with the school's senior assistants to examine issues and challenges faced during planning and implementation of FrogVLE in their respective schools. Phase two involved a survey of a number of questionnaires directed to three major stakeholders; the teachers, students and parents. The survey intended to explore teacher's and student's perspective and attitude towards the use of VLE as a teaching and learning medium and as a learning experience as a whole. In addition, the survey from parents provided insights on how they feel towards the use of VLE for their child's learning. Collectively, the two phases enable improved understanding and provided observations on factors that had affected the implementation of the VLE into primary schools. This study offers the voices of the students which were frequently omitted when addressing innovations as well as teachers who may not always be heard. It is also significant in addressing the importance of teacher's pedagogy on students' learning and its effects to enable more effective ICT integration with a student-centred approach. Finally, parental perceptions in the implementation of VLE in supporting their children's learning have been implicated as having a bearing on educational achievement. The results indicate that the all three stakeholders were positive and highly supportive towards the use of VLE in schools. They were able to understand the benefits of moving towards the modern method of teaching using ICT and accept the change in the education system. However, factors such as condition of ICT facilities at schools and homes as well as inadequate professional development for the teachers in both ICT skills and management skills hindered exploitation of the VLE system in order to fully utilise its benefits. Social influences within different communities and cultures and costs of using the technology also has a significant impact. The findings of this study are important to the Malaysian Ministry of Education because it informs policy makers on the impact of the Virtual Learning Environment (VLE) on teacher's pedagogy and learning of Malaysian primary school children. The information provided to policy makers allows them to make a sound judgement and enables an informed decision making.

Keywords : attitudes towards virtual learning environment (VLE), parental perception, student's learning, teacher's pedagogy

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