Full Length Research Paper

Teachers' changing roles in computer assisted roles in Kenyan secondary schools

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The use of computer technology in Kenyan schools is a relatively new approach that is currently being included in the school curriculum. The introduction of computer technology for use in teaching does not always seem to be accepted outright by most teachers. The purpose of the study reported in this paper was to investigate the teachers' changing roles in double entry lessons that involved the use of a computer-based instruction (CBI) program. A total of sixteen business education teachers taken from ten secondary schools situated in two provinces, Rift Valley and Western teaching double entry for a period of eight weeks. Two instruments, namely (i) the Teachers Interview Schedule (TIS) and (ii) the Classroom Observation Questionnaire (COQ) were used to collect the necessary data. Data was collected and analysed to help unravel what was actually happening as the teachers and the students interacted with the computer-based instruction program and/or instructional materials during double entry lessons implemented in real business education classrooms. Results indicate that the teachers developed better instructional practices as a result of augmenting double entry lessons with the CBI. Most teachers unanimously reported that their role changed from that of being an instructor to that of being a facilitator of the learning process. Although it was evident from a captured episode that amidst the presence of the computer most teachers preferred to do the job in the same way as the conventional methods without all the effort associated with organizing a technological classroom, data from classroom observation of teacher-student, student-student and student-teacher interactions recorded during the instructional process indicated that the teachers did not dominate in the CBI classrooms but gave learners opportunity to interact with each other and the instructional material. The results further showed that some of the unproductive activities and the state of confusion or silence often common in traditional classes where the role of the teacher is domination changed drastically. The use of CBI in this study proved that it has potential not only to change the teachers' roles but also to affect the students' learning in business education*.

Key words: Innovation, Information technology, Interaction, Teacher Roles.

INTRODUCTION

An area of the age old instructional practice that emphasizes the use of voice and the blackboard is currently facing the greatest challenge from the computer-based instruction (CBI). Studies have seem not only to support the idea that the computer is machine that has the capability to motivate students to learn by reducing the teacher's verbal interaction in the classroom while encouraging learner participation, but also described it as the technology that is totally permeating the society

society and creating new conceptions, new forms of interpretation, new ways of instruction and new inputs into our lifestyles (Landsheere, 1991; Tanui, 2003). Perhaps this explains why recent studies show that use of the computer in the classroom is bringing in new roles into the instructional practice (Kiboss, 2000). While the use of CBI is prolific in most developed world schools, it is still a dilemma that poses great challenges to the majority of teachers with regards to their perception and the roles they should play as they cope with this emergent technology. Indeed, the introduction of CBI in Kenyan schools is nevertheless a challenge to the teachers who are battling with the issue of whether to accept the idea of

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