

Florida's EETT Leveraging Laptops Initiative and Its Impact on Teaching Practices: An
Article Review

By

Vandy Pacetti-Tune

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Methods of Inquiry

Nova Southeastern University
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Introduction

The Florida Department of Education funds the implementation of computing through Enhancing Education Through Technology (EETT) funding. Florida has a strong tradition of technology implementation and has recently begun offering statewide professional development opportunities for teachers through state programs, such as the Master Digital Educator Program.

This study is a case study with the purpose of identifying shared patterns of teacher behaviors. Funds from this source were used to provide laptops to teachers (independent variable) in 11 districts with the primary goal of changing teaching practices (dependent variable). The teachers were given a laptop and professional development and were then observed for changed behaviors in the classroom.

Methods

Data collection was completed through two direct classroom observations. Classrooms were randomly selected at participating schools and were conducted for approximately fifteen minutes. Two instruments, which were developed by the Center for Research in Educational Policy at the University of Memphis, were used.

Master Digital Educators served as observers and were selected to observe based on their availability and proximity to participating schools. The observers all received one-day trainings on how to conduct the observations. The teachers did not know they were being observed. Observations were completed twice and 400 hours of observations were collected.

Analysis

The pre- and post-classroom observations were compared using the Cochran, Mantel-Haentzel procedure to derive the statistical differences between the two observations. “Observed percentages, means, standard deviations, and effect sizes were also calculated” (p.147).

Findings

The study suggests that there is an increase in technology use with the implementation of laptops and professional development for teachers. Another suggested component outcome of the study was the areas of the most significant changes were emphasized by statewide professional development.

Research today is focused on targeted teacher observations. This study, however, used unannounced observations and provided more insight into the everyday teaching and learning practices of teachers. More studies of this nature are suggested.

References

Dawson, K., Cavanaugh, C., and Ritzhaupt, A.D. (Winter 2008/2009). Florida’s EETT leveraging laptops initiative and its impact on teaching practice. *Journal of Research on Technology in Education*, 41(2), 143- 159.