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Information and Communication Technology Meshing in Home Economics: An Online Community of Practice

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Abstract — The purpose of this research was to expose the teachers to a project on learning technologies and ways of using technology as a pedagogic practice which could enhance the teaching and learning HE through the use of technology. As has been mentioned earlier, teachers feel ill-prepared to move teaching away from traditional methods and use new pedagogies where appropriate, thereby putting students on center stage in the classroom. The teachers showed that the community of practice and specifically the ICT activities helped them reflect and also progress from knowledge to persuasion stage and then to decision-making. Although the teachers did not interact much, the responses in the interviews and questionnaire showed that they were reflecting and progressing. During this stage the teachers confirmed that they were choosing what was most appropriate for them and what to adopt. All the interviewees confirmed the acceptance of ICT and felt they were in the implementation stage as they were using some lCT in class yet needed more knowledge and ongoing training. Professional development in technology needs to help transform teachers from familiar practices towards ones which require more skills and pedagogic innovation. Teachers need to primarily adopt technology in accordance with their existing practice to ease the process of change whilst new technology is introduced, similarly as the need for compatibility between an old practice and an innovation. I feel there is the need for focused practice on effective technology use in one's own subject in order for teachers to maximize the benefits of ICT.

Keywords — Information, communication, technology, meshing, home economics, online, community, practice

I. Introduction

This research was undertaken because of a personal concern regarding the management of change in the take up of ICTI as a pedagogic practice in the local context, with a particular reference to the Home Economics2 classroom. My hypothesis is that teacher training, current classroom practices and continuous professional development have not evolved enough to maximize on the potential of this innovative pedagogy. The growing importance of ICT in education brought about a personal quest to develop my own skills in computer literacy and eventually gain more knowledge and understanding of how ICT can be used effectively in HE teaching and learning since support agencies such as BECTA provide subject specific support, but not in home economics.

An online community can provide the space to build such resources in collaborative ways. I attempted to share a number of practical examples of "Students do not learn much just sitting in classes listening to teachers, memorizing prepackaged assignments, and spitting out answers. They must talk about what they are learning, write reflectively about it, relate it to past experiences, and apply it to their daily lives. They must make what they learn part of themselves." - Arthur W. Chickering 2 teaching and learning HE using ICT, whilst addressing issues of technology integration. The aim is to give HE teachers more knowledge and pedagogic skills in ICT in order to support integration.

In the Philippines, the use of ICT in education has brought about numerous studies from many parts of the world highlighting the benefits and opportunities as well as the challenges for integration. Lack of software for HE is a barrier to effective integration (Santos, 2008). Reyes (2007) found that teachers are using ICT as an information provider, in the preparation of tests and teaching aids, to upload photos on computer, to deliver PowerPoint presentations and to use the Education Informatization System.

Finally, the Department of Education in Davao City believed that computers and the internet have arrived in schools and are widely used in class in most countries. The computer is seen as a means for the preparation of lessons, with 6 many teachers showing confident usage of word processors and fewer showing confidence in developing electronic presentations. The department of education reiterated that the materials used for teaching with ICT include the internet, material available on the school's computer network and other online material such as the CD-ROM. When these figures are compared to teachers' attitudes, questions arise as to how effectively technology was being used in class.

The purpose of this research was to expose the teachers to a project on learning technologies and ways of using technology as a pedagogic practice which could enhance the teaching and learning of HE through the use of technology. As has been mentioned earlier, teachers feel ill-prepared to move teaching away from traditional methods and use new pedagogies where appropriate, thereby putting students on center stage in the classroom.

II. Methodology

The researcher made these qualitative assumptions that consist of the methods used in the process of qualitative research (Creswell 2003). The procedures used by the researcher are inductive and are based on the researcher's own experience in collecting and analyzing data. A phenomenological study describes the meaning of lived experiences of individuals about a concept or phenomenon (Creswell, 2003) was used in this study. The purpose of this study was to gain insights into the experiences of the secondary teachers who embraced online virtual platforms in promoting information and communication technology as an online community practice in teaching home economics classrooms. Phenomenology is considered the best approach applicable

in this study since the researcher will be asking about the lived experiences of the secondary teachers about their ICT integration experiences using online virtual platforms as an online community practice.

All of the participants were between 18 years old and above and are teachers in selected public schools in Davao City. These participants are currently teaching in the school year 2021-2022 with more than two years of experience in teaching home economics. A total of 10 participants are considered in this study who will join the in-depth interview and focused group discussion. Seven of them will join the in-depth interview (IDI) while the remaining three will be subjected to the focus group discussion (FGD). All data gathered during IDI and FGD will be recorded and transmuted to summarize the responses of the participants in an orderly manner. Below are the inclusion criteria of the participants.

III. Results and Discussion

The purpose of this study was to discover the experiences of home economics teachers on the use of information and communication technology in teaching home economics to students during and after the pandemic. This study would likewise mirror how home economics teachers manage excellent performance in teaching online. Further, the analysis of the data revealed three major themes with four sub-themes each; namely, role of internet in HE classrooms, flexibility of a teacher and teacher's multi-tasking tasks commitment.

The teachers showed that the community of practice and specifically the ICT activities helped them reflect and also progress from knowledge to persuasion stage and then to decision-making. Although the teachers did not interact much, the responses in the interviews and questionnaire showed that they were reflecting and progressing. During this stage the teachers confirmed that they were choosing what was most appropriate for them and what to adopt. All the interviewees confirmed the acceptance of ICT and felt they were in the implementation stage as they were using some lCT in class yet needed more knowledge and ongoing training. Professional development in technology needs to help transform teachers from familiar practices towards ones which require more skills and pedagogic innovation. Teachers need to primarily adopt technology in accordance with their existing practice to ease the process of change whilst new technology is introduced, similarly as the need for compatibility between an old practice and an innovation. I feel there is the need for focused practice on effective technology use in one's own subject in order for teachers to maximize the benefits of ICT.

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