The iPad as an Instructional Tool: An Examination of Teacher Implementation Experiences

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Abstract
At present, handheld devices and tablet computers are infiltrating public schools across the nation, the most popular model being the Apple iPad. Schools and teachers are attempting to integrate the devices and are using a variety of methods and models for implementation. The purpose of this study was to examine the implementation of the iPad as an instructional tool through the experiences of classroom teachers. A review of related literature was conducted to inform the conceptual framework, design, data collection, analysis, and synthesis components and stages of this study. Qualitative methods, including teacher-participant interviews and classroom observations, were utilized in this study and served to inform the researcher's understanding of the phenomenon. The purposefully selected sample consisted of eight teacher-participants who were engaged in an iPad implementation project in their respective schools in Jobs School District. The data
collected underwent several phases of coding and subsequent findings were organized to reflect the research questions and conceptual framework. The research revealed that teachers did not receive adequate support to integrate iPads in their respective content areas. As a result, teachers relied on colleagues and their students for support. The research also revealed that teacher pedagogical behaviors remained unchanged throughout the implementation period. Teachers tended to continue to focus on standardized test preparation and to rely on the same instructional methods that they utilized prior to implementing the devices. In addition, the research indicated that teachers perceived that iPads had the potential to positively impact student engagement and learning. This was based on teachers' perceptions of increases related to student time-on-task and improvements in quality of work. Recommendations are offered for practicing educators, for further research, and for educational policy.

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