

Findings Abstract

Changes in Stakeholders' Beliefs About Integrating Technology into the Classroom after a Technology-Immersed Classroom Experience

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The purpose of this qualitative study was to see how stakeholders' expectations and mental models about learning and the use of technology in the classroom changed after six weeks in a technology-immersed classroom. Through the use of case study methodology, a picture was revealed of how participants in the microworld (consisting of a teacher, administrators, students, and parents, associated with a 3rd grade classroom) viewed learning goals and the use of technology before a technology-immersed classroom experience and afterward. Participants were asked to identify the learning goals of the classroom, stakeholders' roles to support those learning goals, and technology's support function for the learning goals. Systems theory was used to examine the alignment of mental models these stakeholders held.

Data sources included participant-observation, pre- and post- interviews with the thirteen participants, video, student projects, and student and teacher journals. An inductive data analysis of the data revealed "learning goals," "stakeholder roles," and "technology support function" categories. These categories in turn were aligned with three broad domains, "Instructivist/ Traditional," "Neutral," and "Constructivist/Progressive." Findings revealed that most stakeholders shifted their focus after the technology-immersed experience to the "Constructivist/Progressive" domain. Although most of the stakeholder groups in this microworld were in alignment with their beliefs before and after the technology-immersed classroom experience, some stakeholders were not comfortable with how technology altered the classroom dynamics.

This study highlighted how technology can act as a catalyst in classrooms, making the learning environment more varied and open while encouraging broader social interactions between teacher and students, thus altering traditional teacher-student roles. This study highlighted stakeholders' alignment of views about using technology to support learning, and how this potentially affects integrating technology in schools. Recommendations for future research and practical application of the findings for researchers, teachers, and administrators were included.