

Skole-IT Impact Study 2

Skole-IT Steering Committee, June 2002

Skole-IT (School-ICT)

Skole-IT is an in-service training course for teachers in primary and lower secondary school. The focus of the course is the pedagogical implementation of ICT in education. To this day 35,000 teachers have participated in this course, which is based on principles of team work, collaborative learning, process oriented work and qualifying guidance. See www.school-ict.org.

In order to learn about the longer-term impact of this training course, the steering committee initiated an independent study among 1000 participants who finished the course before January 2001.

The main conclusions

The study shows that Skole-IT has had a distinct impact on teachers' use of ICT. Teachers state that their participation in the course has meant an increase both in their use of ICT in education and in their use of ICT for communication and collaborative purposes. In addition to this participating teachers now use a wider variety of software and they state that Skole-IT has inspired them to take a greater part in the ICT development of their school.

The teachers themselves feel that they still need to improve their skills. At this point they mention two areas of particular interest; the use of subject specific educational software and the use of specific ICT tools. They do not to the same extent mention the need for additional theoretical knowledge of the implementation of ICT in education.

Attending a course is one thing, implementing the skills and knowledge gained in the everyday teaching practice is another. Teachers state that if they are to implement ICT in education there are three important preconditions; maintenance and update of the computers, and purchase of new equipment.

The fact that teachers focus on the state of the equipment indicates that there will be a continued need for investments in computers despite recent, massive investments at primary school level. The impact study also indicates that an advanced Skole-IT course and increased ICT guidance and counselling may have a positive impact on the teachers' use of ICT.

The other main findings of the study are:

The largest impact of Skole-IT has been on the use of the Internet in education

Almost 9 out of 10 teachers state that now they more frequently plan and implement processes where students search for information on the Internet.

Success parameters determining the impact of Skole-IT

The study shows that the impact of Skole-IT is closely connected with parameters of teachers' daily life: teachers with access to technical and pedagogical guidance and support, and with a computer with access from home to the school find the impact of participating in Skole-IT larger than the teachers without these opportunities.

Female teachers generally find the impact to be somewhat larger than male teachers

Female teachers generally value the impact of Skole-IT somewhat larger than male teachers do – both in relation to the use of ICT in education, personal use of the computer and use of the computer as a means for communication and collaboration.

Previous experience with the use of computers in education is important

Before participation in Skole-IT 31% of the teachers used a computer once or more during the week in connection with their teaching activities. The study shows that this group of teachers experience the most distinct impact of Skole-IT.

Time is a significant element in the perceived utility value

Teachers that have spent less than 50 hours on Skole-IT have not experienced the same impact as those who have spent as many as 150 hours. At the same time, teachers that have spent more than 150 hours have experienced less impact than the average teacher.

Skole-IT has had a particular impact in relation to the use of e-mail and electronic conferences

Almost 9 out of 10 teachers use e-mail and electronic conferences as a result of their participation in Skole-IT. A similar high impact is seen on the use of the Internet and word processing, whereas the impact on teachers' use of spreadsheets and databases is not as high.

Younger teachers experience less impact

Teachers under 35 generally report of less impact of their participation in Skole-IT than their older colleagues.

Explosive growth in the use of electronic communication as a result of Skole-IT

The study shows that the vast majority of teachers communicate with their colleagues electronically more frequently as a result of participating in Skole-IT. The study shows no increase in electronic communication with the students' parents.

The interaction between pedagogy and technology is an impact factor

It is important for the impact to focus on aspects of pedagogy as well as ICT skills when working with Skole-IT. Teachers working with both aspects experience a slightly higher impact on the

planning and implementation of educational processes than teachers focussing on either the pedagogical aspect or the ICT skills aspect.

The content of the module tasks has an impact on the result

Teachers working with future educational processes in their module tasks have experienced a larger impact than teachers working with fictive or previously implemented lessons.

Room for improvement of Skole-IT

Although teachers find that Skole-IT is very useful and generally express their satisfaction with the form and content of the course there is still room for improvement. Among other things, the teachers suggest

- increased differentiation of the course to allow for diversity in previous knowledge, subjects and form level
- add more modules and optional supplementary modules to Skole-IT
- more intensive focus on ensuring active participation from all - including individual tests
- the course must be followed in daily practice by school based development of qualifications

For more information, please contact

Skole-IT/School-ICT
UNI•C
Olof Palmes Alle 38
DK-8200 Aarhus N

Tel: +45 8937 6666
E-mail: kirsten.a.nohr@uni-c.dk