Texas Agri-Science Teachers’ Attitude Toward and Stages of Adoption of Information Technology

A Critique

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My first few days on campus for my Doctoral degree were spent learning about the Apple II+ and all of its potential. I wonder what they would think about the things they said back then after reading this paper. Twenty years later, it is refreshing to learn that a high percentage, approximately 40 percent, of Texas teachers are at the adoption and creative applications stage of adoption. Yet, it is somewhat disappointing to learn that computer technology has not been fully implemented into the instructional program because of time constraints just as some of the hardcore opposition had predicted twenty years ago.

The authors are to be commended for their work. They have presented an excellent review of how technology is being adopted by sharing with the reader, Roger’s and Russell’s stages of technology adoption. The use of this framework to determine the Texas teacher’s attitude is commendable. Additional review of literature helps build a strong theoretical base for this study.

The procedures were well defined and appear to be appropriate for this descriptive correlational study. The instrument was appropriately pilot tested for validity and reliability. It is unclear whether the Cronbach’s alpha was for the pilot test or for the returned instruments. The “online version” left the reader to wonder if there were two versions and if the results reported in this paper were only for the online version. Early and late responders were different and as a result the authors indicated that the results were only generalizable to the accepting sample. Yet the conclusions were generalized to the Texas Agri-Science teachers. It would have been helpful to know how many follow-ups were done and if there was an attempt to determine the characteristics of non-responders. It is possible that non-responders were in the early stages of adoption and did not feel comfortable in responding to the survey online. If this was true of the 92 non-responders, I suspect your conclusions may be different.

The objectives of the study were clearly defined and the results and conclusions directly related to the objectives. I applaud your including a description of Russell’s Stages of Adoption of Technology in the instrument so that teachers were indicating their level of adoption based on a common, clearly defined scale.

Questions for further discussion and thought are:

1. At what point in the different stages of adoption should leaders consider the technology fully adopted and shift their focus to the next emerging technology?

2. What barriers to adoption are presented by older, more experienced teachers and what strategies can you suggest to overcome the barriers?