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DISSERTATION ABSTRACT

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Factors Related to Internet Adoption by Ohio Public-school Teachers

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The Internet holds great promise for enhancing teaching/learning activities and extending opportunities for interaction and collaboration among learners. It can be integrated into classroom activities in the form of problem-solving projects, interpersonal exchanges, information collection, and interactive learning activities (Harris, 1995). Such potential benefits of the Internet for the teaching/learning process encouraged decision-makers in Ohio to provide public schools with Internet connections and necessary technology equipment. The purpose of the study was to examine the extent of Ohio public teachers' use of the Internet in classroom activities. The second purpose was to investigate the relationship between teachers' attitudes toward the value of the Internet, administrative support, and time. The study also investigated which predictors among these factors contributed the most in explaining the variance of the level of Internet use by classroom teachers. The primary data source was a survey completed by 149 public school teachers that varied in teaching grade level and locations throughout the State. The other source of data was the interviews with six classroom teachers who rarely used the Internet in teaching. Multiple regression was computed to investigate the correlation between the level of Internet use in classroom activities and the combination of the independent variables. The results indicated that not many teachers use the Internet in teaching/learning activities even through all public schools in the survey with an Internet connection. Findings also showed a significant relationship between the level of Internet use and the availability of Internet access in classroom, the problem of Internet access, teachers' attitudes toward the value of the Internet for classroom activities, and teachers' own Internet proficiency. These findings reveal that Internet utilization in schools can be improved by providing teachers with reliable Internet connection in their classrooms, time, and professional development programs.