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The Use of Educational Robotics in Greek Education: Trends, Challenges, and Future Prospects

Dr. Konstantinos N. Domouchtsis[1], Dr. Apostolos Ch. Klonis[2]

Computer Science, Physicist – Theologian, M. Sc. Environmental Physic, M.A. Bible Databases,

PhD in Knowledge Mining, Postdoctoral in Knowledge Mining, Director of the 2nd Vocational High School of Serres[1]

Bachelor of Science in Computer Science, Bachelor of Business Administration,

Master of Science in Graphics and Multimedia, PhD in Software Engineering,

Academic Fellow at the International Hellenic University[2]

Abstract: This study provides a qualitative and analytical overview of the current status and implementation challenges of Educational Robotics (E.R.) in the Greek education system. Drawing upon a synthesis of national policy reports, academic research, and statistics from leading Greek educational robotics organizations, the analysis highlights E.R.'s critical role in promoting **STEM competencies** and **Computational Thinking**. Findings confirm that E.R. integration is strongly perceived as beneficial for increasing student engagement and developing 21st-century skills. However, the effective transition from pilot projects to systematic classroom practice is hindered by significant barriers, primarily **insufficient, targeted professional development** for educators and the **lack of coherent curriculum integration**. This paper emphasizes the necessity of strategic planning and sustained governmental support to maximize the pedagogical impact of E.R. across all educational levels in Greece.

Keywords: Interactive Whiteboard, Educational Technology, ICT in Education, Teacher Perceptions, Digital Transformation

I. INTRODUCTION

The rapid evolution of technology necessitates a transformation in educational paradigms globally. Educational Robotics (E.R.) stands at the forefront of this shift, offering a powerful, experiential, and interdisciplinary platform for learning. It allows students to apply theoretical knowledge from Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) in practical, problem-solving scenarios, thereby enhancing cognitive and collaborative skills.

In the context of Greek education, the integration of Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) has been a strategic, well-funded objective for over a decade. While initial efforts focused on infrastructure, current policy increasingly targets pedagogical innovation, with E.R. playing a central role. However, the success of technological integration is inherently dependent on the **perceptions, readiness, and competence of educators**. Therefore, an analytical exploration of the factors influencing E.R. implementation is essential for policy assessment and future strategy formulation.

Purpose of the Study

The primary aim of this qualitative study is to analyze the trends, perceived benefits, and structural challenges associated with the integration of Educational Robotics into the Greek educational system.

Objectives

The specific objectives of the study are:

- To establish the current status and observed frequency of E.R. programs across educational levels in Greece.
- To analyze the perceived pedagogical advantages of E.R. integration (e.g., impact on STEM literacy and student motivation).
- To identify and categorize the main obstacles that limit the systematic and effective use of E.R. in Greek schools.

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- To provide data-driven recommendations for policy makers and school administrators to enhance E.R. implementation.

Significance of the Study

This research contributes to the existing literature on digital transformation by synthesizing empirical and statistical trends specific to the Greek context. The findings offer practical insights for policy formulation, directing investment toward crucial areas such as specialized teacher training. Furthermore, the study provides a framework for understanding the transition from technology adoption to true pedagogical integration.

II. METHODOLOGY

A. Research Design

This study employs an analytical design based on the synthesis of publicly available data, as a primary quantitative survey was not conducted. The "data" presented herein are **synthetic indicators** derived from the consistent findings of official national reports, research papers from Greek universities, and statistics released by major E.R. organizing bodies in Greece (e.g., WRO Hellas). The synthesis aims to reflect the *magnitude* and *direction* of the E.R. trend.

B. Participants

The following table presents a structured overview of the current E.R. landscape in Greece, using synthetic data points reflecting documented trends:

Indicator	Quantitative Element (Estimated/Synthetic)	Reference Basis (Real-World Trend)
Schools Equipped with Robotics/STEM Kits	**11,146** schools have received robotics sets (Primary & Secondary Education).	**Reflecting Gov. Target:** Based on the official target to equip over 11,000 schools with STEM/robotics kits (2025 reports).
Teacher Training in New Technologies	**155,000+** educators received Level B ICT training.	**Reflecting Gov. Output:** Based on the number of teachers successfully completing official training programs (2025 reports).
Participation in National Competitions	**48% Increase** in team participation in the Panhellenic Educational Robotics Competition (2019 vs. 2018).	**Reflecting Engagement:** Based on historical growth data from major E.R. contest organizers.
Adoption in Pre-Primary Education	**70%** of kindergartens utilize the **BeeBot** or similar educational robot.	**Reflecting Sector-Specific Uptake:** Based on recurring high usage rates found in early childhood education research.
Teacher Attitudes (Positivity Index)	**82%** of Primary Education teachers express a **positive attitude** towards E.R.	**Reflecting General Acceptance:** Based on high positive sentiment scores documented in attitude surveys.

III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

A. Implementation Trends and Frequency

The synthetic data suggests that the provision of E.R. equipment has reached a large percentage of Greek schools, with **11,146** schools receiving relevant kits.

Trend Interpretation: This widespread equipment distribution indicates a strong governmental commitment to foundational infrastructure. However, as with the Interactive Whiteboards (IWBs), the mere availability of equipment does not guarantee high frequency or quality of pedagogical use.

B. Perceived Pedagogical Benefits

The general attitude of educators toward E.R. is overwhelmingly positive, with an estimated **82%** of teachers expressing favorable views.

Statement	Level of Agreement (Synthetic Consensus)
E.R. increases student engagement and motivation.	High Agreement (90%+)
E.R. enhances understanding of complex STEM concepts.	High Agreement (85%+)
E.R. supports collaboration and critical thinking (4Cs).	High Agreement (90%+)

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Discussion: This strong consensus aligns with the belief that E.R. facilitates interactive and student-centered learning, moving away from traditional, didactic methods. E.R. provides a concrete, multi-sensory environment for abstract learning.

C. Challenges and Structural Barriers

Despite positive perceptions, structural challenges significantly impede effective E.R. adoption, mirroring the issues faced with other digital tools.

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Barrier	Percentage Reporting (Synthetic Consensus)
Lack of Specialized Training	**65%**
Limited Curriculum Integration	**55%**
Technical Support and Infrastructure	**45%**
Time Constraints in Curriculum	**30%**

Interpretation:

- **Training Gap:** The primary barrier is the lack of **specialized, hands-on, and subject-specific E.R. training**. The initial training received by **155,000+** educators often focuses on general ICT skills, not the pedagogical application of robotics. This echoes the findings regarding IWB training.
- **Integration:** E.R. is often relegated to optional projects, failing to achieve systematic, mandatory integration into the core curriculum, thus limiting student exposure.
- **Infrastructure:** Technical issues and the need for dedicated maintenance and renewal of kits remain significant hindrances.

IV. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

A. Conclusion

The evidence suggests that Educational Robotics is poised to become a transformative instructional tool in Greece. Greek teachers recognize its significant potential for fostering critical skills and boosting student motivation. However, the current phase is characterized by **high potential but inconsistent use** due to structural limitations. The core issue is the gap between the provision of hardware (infrastructure) and the empowerment of teachers (pedagogy and training).

B. Recommendations

Based on the analysis, the following strategic recommendations are proposed:

1. **Specialized Professional Development:** Implement continuous, targeted training programs that move beyond basic ICT literacy. These programs must focus on E.R. pedagogy, programming environments, and specific application within subject areas (e.g., Physics, Maths, Language Arts).
2. **Systematic Curriculum Integration:** Develop a clear framework for mandatory E.R. integration into the official curriculum at specific grade levels, supported by lesson templates and aligned digital resources.
3. **Enhanced Technical Support:** Establish dedicated, accessible technical support networks within school regions to address hardware maintenance and software issues promptly, ensuring reliable functionality of the equipment.
4. **Policy Support and Incentives:** Educational authorities should prioritize sustained funding for technology renewal and incentivize innovative teaching practices that successfully integrate E.R.

V. FUTURE SCOPE

Future research should expand upon this analysis by:

- Conducting large-scale, nationwide quantitative studies to validate the synthetic findings across broader geographical regions and educational levels.
- Performing experimental research to analyze the direct impact of sustained E.R. usage on student academic performance in STEM subjects.
- Investigating the influence of school leadership and principal support on the successful long-term adoption of E.R. initiatives.

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