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DIGITAL LEARNING AND ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE OF FINAL YEAR STUDENTS IN GOVERNMENT UNIVERSITY IN NIGERIA

BY

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Abstract

Purpose: *The study was carried out how digital learning influences academic performance of final year students in government university in Nigeria*

Design/Methodology/Approach: *This study adopted the descriptive survey design. The population of the study consists of 113 final year students in some selected universities Nigeria. A self constructed questionnaire was used for the study. A total of 113 copies of the questionnaire were distributed and 95 copies were retrieved using descriptive statistics mean and percentage mean score of 2.5 and above and percentage score of 50% were considered as acceptable.*

Findings: *The study revealed that digital learning tools influence final students' academic performance in the following order by boosting engagement, improving resource access, better collaboration, immediate feedback and flexible access. The study further shows the challenges inhibiting against final year students digital learning in Nigeria universities as the digital divide, passive consumption, superficial learning risks, infrastructure gaps and digital literacy gaps.*

Implication: *This is the first of its kind to investigate digital learning and academic performance of final year students in government university in Nigeria*

Originality/Value: *The study recommends that Universities should integrate digital learning tools into regular teaching practices*

Keywords: *Digital learning, academic performance, final year students, Government University*

Introduction

Final students are individual who enrolled in the last year of an academic program, such as a college or university degree. For their academic performance be achieved, they heavily rely on digital learning. Any educational method that makes use of computers, the internet, and digital technology to enhance and facilitate instruction is referred to as digital learning. Digital learning is a process of learning that is assisted or mediated by digital technologies. These come in a variety of forms, such as blended learning, online learning, mobile learning, and any educational software and resources that are used for instruction over time. Nigeria's educational system has been greatly impacted by digital learning, this includes how technology affects training methods since it allows students to study more interactively while assisting teachers in

presenting material in a more dynamic manner. Access to digital study resources can happen in a matter of seconds as more final year students adopt technology.

Digital learning reduces the learning gap and gives students access to new growth and development options, such as interactive learning tools and online courses. According to Carlos (2024), using digital tools in scientific classes had a positive effect on students' engagement and attention spans. Students in their last year do better academically when they are given access to digital tools, and this drastically affects their academic performance. Academic performance evaluates how successfully students, instructors, or organizations meet their immediate and long-term learning objectives. The success people achieve in educational environments is frequently referred to as academic performance, and it is usually measured by test scores and grades that show how well students, instructors, or educational institutions have met their academic objectives. According to Cano Celestino and Robles Rivera (2018), academic performance is the outcome of student's school accomplishments and is impacted by a variety of factors, including family, peer group, economic opportunities, teachers, classmates, motivation, and interest in the subject activities.

According to Pramila-Savukoski et al. (2023), health science students' proficiency with digital learning expands their comprehension of associated skills in addition to improving their overall abilities. After analyzing PISA 2018 data, Örnek et al. (2024) discovered a substantial correlation between scientific academic performance and students' ICT interaction practices. However, there are some significant obstacles to digital learning, such as unequal access to technology, low student engagement, and technical interruptions. Digital technologies provide flexibility and personalized learning, but access is still uneven, particularly for low-income and rural students (Ojong, 2025). The availability of devices, internet connectivity, and digital literacy are all indicators of the digital divide (Ojong, 2025). Academic performance are impacted by socioeconomic factors that affect students' capacity to gain from digital education (Shamsudinova et al., 2025). One major barrier is the absence of digital infrastructure, especially in underprivileged areas (Pather, 2021). It is as a result of these numerous benefits and issues that prompted the researcher to embark on this study digital learning and

academic performance of final year students in Government University in Nigeria.

Statement of the problem

The goal of integrating digital learning into the classroom is to improve instruction by increasing learning's effectiveness, accessibility, and engagement. These technologies give students the chance to work with peers, access a variety of instructional resources, and hone their critical thinking and problem-solving abilities. Students' academic performance, academic interest, and learning abilities can all be enhanced by the increased usage of digital textbooks in the classroom. By regularly utilizing information and communication technology (ICT) alongside teachers in the classroom, final year students without personal computers can greatly improve their current and long-term academic performance compared to those who utilize personal computers at home, by personalizing education, boosting engagement, and offering immediate feedback, technology enhances learning and academic success.

It has been observed that research literature on digital learning and academic performance exist, but no study has been carried on digital learning and academic performance of final year students in Government University in Nigeria, hence the need for this research.

Research Objectives

The following research objectives were formulated to guide the study.

1. To examine how digital learning influence final students' academic achievement
2. To find out the challenges inhibiting against digital learning in Nigeria Universities

Literature review

Gilster (1997) coined the phrase "digital literacy." According to Meyers et al. (2013), the first definition of "digital literacy" refers to the exceptional capacity to access a variety of online information sources, surpassing the fundamental skills of reading, writing, speaking, and listening. The phrase "digital literacy" has evolved, modified, and been used in different ways in tandem with the advancement of digital technology (Aabø, 2005). Digital literacy is described as technological competence in applying information literacy abilities, such as the capacity to locate, use, manage, organize, display, and assess information digitally (Meyers et al., 2013). The use of digital technologies, which are a part of electronic

technology and comprise the application and use of various software for social, educational, and recreational purposes at home and in educational institutions, is linked to digital literacy (Ng, 2012).

The ability of a student to fulfill their role as a student, including attending lectures and finishing both academic and extracurricular assignments, is known as academic performance (Okonkwo, Unwana, & Ekomobong, 2025). (). Although indications, components, or desired patterns can be used to gage a student's academic achievement, the Grade Point Average (GPA) is typically used (Mehrvarz et al., 2021; Mehrvarz et al., 2023). According to Chang et al. (2019) and Salendab (2023), academic performance is also evaluated by gaging students' capacity for learning and managing academic tasks. By incorporating digital media into education, for instructors, students, and educational institutions, integrating digital technology into instruction to enhance students' academic performance is a challenge (Hutain and Michinov, 2022).

Students who are more proficient with digital media are able to locate information that can be applied to improve results. Additionally, using digital tools and systems in their communication processes can help students perform better (Mehrvarz et al., 2021). Lo (2024) asserts that digital competency in higher education should include ethical and environmental responsibility in addition to practical abilities. The ethical dimension refers to an individual's capacity to use technology in a respectful, safe, and productive way with others (Mehrvarz et al., 2021). Academic success is frequently a crucial component of research. Current research frequently considers school atmosphere, family background, teacher support, learning motivation, and self-regulation skills (Demirtas-Zorbaz et al., 2021). As educational informatization has grown, researchers have progressively concentrated on how new media and technology affect academic performance. According to research, students' academic performance is greatly impacted by online communication in online learning systems (Suad et al., 2024), environmental compatibility, and personal creativity (W. T. Wang & Lin, 2021). Students' academic performance, academic engagement, and learning abilities can all be enhanced by the increased usage of digital textbooks in the classroom (Lee et al., 2023). By regularly utilizing information and communication technology (ICT) with teachers in classrooms, students without personal computers can greatly improve their current and long-term academic performance compared to those who use

personal computers alone at home (J. Hong et al., 2024). Gamified digital game-based learning (DGBL) combined with the ARCS paradigm can significantly increase student interest, academic achievement, and practical knowledge in higher physical education (Camacho-Sánchez et al., 2023). Through empirical research, Ibrahim and Aldawsari (2023) discovered that digital skills had an indirect impact on students' academic performance by increasing their learning self-efficacy. According to Tran-Duong (2023), media literacy among undergraduate students has a beneficial impact on perceived learning outcomes, with critical production having the biggest impact. According to Pramila-Savukoski et al. (2023), health science students' proficiency with digital learning expands their comprehension of associated skills in addition to improving their overall abilities.

Research Methodology

This study adopted the descriptive survey design. The population of the study consists of 113 final year students in some selected universities Nigeria. A self-constructed questionnaire was used for the study. A total of 113 copies of the questionnaire were distributed and 95 copies were retrieved using descriptive statistics mean and percentage mean score of 2.5 and above and percentage score of 50% were considered as acceptable.

Population of the study (Sampled)

Table 1

S/N	Selected Universities in Nigeria	Final year students
1	University of Portharcourt	37
2	Kwara State University	18
3	Delta State University	19
4	University of Maiduguri	21
	Total	**95**

Table 1 shows the sample size of final year students in the following order: University of Portharcourt (37), Kwara State University (18), Delta State University (19) and University of Maiduguri (21) respectively.

Table 2: How digital learning tools influence final students' academic performance
Keys: Strongly agreed, Agree, Disagree, Strongly disagree

S/N	Items	SA	A	D	SD	-x	Decision
1	Boosting Engagement	42	45	7	1	3.3	Accepted
2	Improving Resource Access	34	49	10	2	3.1	Accepted
3	Better Collaboration	48	39	7	1	3.4	Accepted
4	Immediate Feedback	42	44	6	3	3.3	Accepted
5	Flexible Access	40	41	5	9	3.1	Accepted

Table 2 depicts how digital learning tools influence final students' academic performance in the following order**:** Boosting Engagement (3.3), Improving Resource Access (3.1), Better Collaboration (3.4), Immediate Feedback (3.3) and Flexible Access (3.1) respectively.

Table 3
Challenges inhibiting against final year students digital learning in Nigeria Universities
Key: Strongly agreed, Agree, Disagree, Strongly disagree

S/N	Items	SA	A	D	SD	-x	Decision
1	The Digital Divide	34	47	6	8	3.1	Accepted
2	Passive Consumption	33	49	9	4	3.1	Accepted
3	Superficial Learning Risks	43	38	7	7	3.2	Accepted
4	Infrastructure Gaps	42	38	9	6	3.2	Accepted
5	Digital Literacy Gaps	47	42	6	0	3.4	Accepted

Table 3 shows the Challenges inhibiting against final year students digital learning in Nigeria Universities as the digital divide (3.1), passive consumption (3.1), superficial learning risks (3.2), infrastructure gaps (3.2) and digital literacy gaps (3.4) respectively.

Discussion of findings

The study is on digital learning and academic performance of final year students in Government University in Nigeria. Two research questions were formulated to guide the study. After the analysis, the effects of digital learning on academic performance of final year

students are Boosting engagement, improving resource access, better collaboration, immediate feedback and flexible access That is, the greater the students' digital learning, the more frequently they were involved in informal digital learning, the better their academic performance. Digital literacy was found to be key to the successful academic performance of final year students in some selected universities in Nigeria . This result is consistent with Vrana's (2014) research, which found that digitally literate people's skills are essential for students' academic and personal growth because they are needed to create an effective informal learning environment that bridges the gaps between digital and non-digital learning methods (Mehrvarz et al., 2023; Mehrvarz et al., 2021). Also challenges such as the digital divide, passive consumption, superficial learning risks, infrastructure gaps and digital literacy gaps were affirmed as obstacles to digital learning.

Recommendations

1. Digital learning resources should be incorporated into standard teaching procedures at universities.
2. Professional training in educational technology should be provided to lecturers.

Conclusion

Final year students' academic performance is greatly improved by the use of digital learning resources in the classroom. According to the study, students' motivation, engagement, and learning outcomes are all positively impacted by digital learning resources. The efficient use of digital technologies to enhance teaching and learning processes should be encouraged by educational institutions. To get the most out of digital learning resources, educators should be trained in technology-enhanced teaching techniques. Future studies should investigate how digital learning tools affect students' academic performance over the long run and how well they work in various educational settings.

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