RESEARCH IN MANAGEMENT OF TECHNOLOGY AND BUSINESS
e-ISSN: 2773-5044

RMTB

Vol. 5 No. 2 (2024) 204-213
https://publisher.uthm.edu.my/periodicals/index.php/rmtb

The Impact of Digital Transformation on Educational Outcomes: A Study of Technology Integration in Pakistani Schools

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DOI: https://doi.org/10.30880/rmtb.2024.05.02.023

Article Info

Received: 30 September 2024
Accepted: 01 November 2024
Available online: 01 December 2024

Keywords

Digital Transformation, Educational Outcomes, Pakistan, Regional Disparities, Technology Integration

Abstract

The utilization of digital technologies in the education sector has emerged as a promising solution to address the varied challenges encountered by the educational system in Pakistan. This study investigates the potential influence of digital transformation on educational outcomes, specifically focusing on the impact of technology integration, teacher training, and infrastructure on student engagement and academic performance. This research aims to examine the potential efficacy of digital transformation in enhancing educational standards and reducing regional disparities within Pakistani schools. A mixed-methods approach was adopted, combining quantitative and qualitative data collection techniques. Surveys were administered to 500 students, 100 teachers, and 20 administrators from 50 schools, and academic performance data were collected from school records. Additionally, semi-structured interviews and focus groups were conducted to provide contextual insights. The collected data were analysed using correlation and regression analyses for the quantitative data and thematic analysis for the qualitative data. The research results revealed a significant positive correlation between technology integration and student engagement ($r = 0.65$, $p < 0.01$), as well as between teacher training and academic performance ($r = 0.48$, $p < 0.05$). The regression analysis indicated that technology integration strongly predicts student engagement ($\beta = 0.52$, $R^2 = 0.58$, $p < 0.01$). However, the study highlighted substantial challenges, particularly in rural areas with limited infrastructure and access to digital tools. The study concludes that although digital transformation offers significant potential to enhance educational outcomes, addressing regional disparities is crucial to universalising these benefits nationwide. The research findings have important implications for policymakers. They emphasise the urgent need for targeted interventions to support rural schools and ensure equitable access to digital resources. Furthermore, the findings underscore the importance of continuous teacher training and robust

infrastructure to maximise the impact of technology in the educational context.

1. Introduction

The exponential progress of digital technology in recent decades has profoundly revolutionised many industries globally, including education. The incorporation of technology into the educational system in Pakistan has become progressively crucial as the nation aims to improve its academic achievements and tackle persistent issues such as low literacy rates, insufficient infrastructure, and inequalities between rural and urban settings. Digital transformation in education refers to the deliberate use and integration of digital technologies, resources, and approaches to enhance teaching and learning processes. The transition to digital education encompasses more than just the use of technology; it denotes a profound transformation in the delivery and perception of education by students and teachers. A comprehensive analysis of the influence of digital transformation on educational achievements in Pakistani schools is crucial for formulating policies that efficiently use technology to enhance education in the nation.

Despite the notable regional asymmetries in the education system in Pakistan, there is a growing recognition of the potential of digital technology to bridge the educational gap. Metropolitan areas often have superior availability of educational resources, including technology, in comparison to rural parts. Inequalities of this kind are a significant obstacle to attaining fair educational results nationwide. However, the increasing acknowledgement of the capacity of digital technology to narrow the educational gap and improve performance in learning, especially in disadvantaged regions, is a positive development. A range of governmental and commercial endeavours have been initiated to facilitate the incorporation of technology in educational institutions, including the Digital Pakistan Initiative and the implementation of online learning platforms during the COVID-19 epidemic. The efficacy of these programs in enhancing educational achievements is a crucial subject of study, namely in comprehending the utilisation of digital technologies in various settings within the nation (Khan, 2023; Ali & Bano, 2022).

The use of technology in education is often accompanied by obstacles, such as the need for sufficient infrastructure, teacher preparation, and curriculum design that is compatible with digital technologies. In the context of Pakistan, these constraints are exacerbated by socio-economic variables, including poverty and restricted availability of power and internet in rural regions. Furthermore, the success of educational technology integration relies significantly on the ability of instructors to use these tools in the classroom efficiently. Teacher training programmes ensure educators have the necessary skills and knowledge to educate and incorporate technology into their instructional methods effectively. Research indicates that comprehensive training and support for instructors may significantly enhance student engagement, motivation, and academic achievement via digital technologies (Ahmed, 2021; Fatima *et al.*, 2023).

One crucial element of digital transformation in education is the formulation and execution of policies that facilitate and encourage the integration of technology in educational institutions. The government's essential role in Pakistan is to promote digital education by establishing a conducive atmosphere that fosters innovation and overcomes obstacles to technology integration. These efforts include not only the provision of essential infrastructure and resources but also the formulation of laws that guarantee fair and equal access to digital education in all geographical areas. The study of the influence of government policies on the achievement of digital transformation in education is crucial as it may provide valuable insights into the efficacy of existing programs and identify areas that need more focus (Hussain & Farooq, 2023; Rana *et al.*, 2024).

The advent of digitalisation in education in Pakistan brings out many possibilities and obstacles. Although technology in schools can enhance educational achievements, especially in disadvantaged areas, it also necessitates a meticulous examination of the distinct obstacles encountered by the Pakistani education system. This research aims to investigate the influence of digital transformation on educational achievements in Pakistani schools via an analysis of the level of technology integration, the difficulties faced, and the efficacy of government policies and teacher training programs. By doing this study, we aim to make a meaningful contribution to the continuous endeavours to improve education in Pakistan and provide essential perspectives for policymakers, educators, and stakeholders in the education industry.

1.1 Problem Statement

Despite the increasing focus on digital transformation in education worldwide, Pakistan encounters substantial obstacles in successfully incorporating technology into its schools, resulting in unequal educational results nationwide. Although metropolitan schools have begun using digital technologies, rural regions lagged because of inadequate infrastructure, insufficient teacher training, and socio-economic obstacles. This difference gives rise to worries over the general efficacy of digital activities in enhancing educational quality on a national scale. Furthermore, the current knowledge of the effects of these technologies on student involvement, academic achievement, and long-term educational success is restricted. The lack of systematic research assessing the

influence of technology integration in various educational settings in Pakistan adds complexity to the development of successful approaches for digital education. This study aims to critically analyse the impact of digital transformation on academic achievements in Pakistani schools. The main objective is identifying the obstacles and possibilities related to integrating technology in various areas (Nawaz & Baig, 2023).

1.2 Significance of the Study

The importance of this research resides in its capacity to enlighten educational policy and practice in Pakistan by providing factual data on the influence of digital transformation on academic results. In the pursuit of updating its education system and narrowing the disparity between urban and rural schools, it is essential to comprehend the efficacy of using technology. This analysis will enhance the current knowledge body by emphasising the obstacles and possibilities linked to integrating digital technologies in a varied educational environment. Moreover, the results guide policymakers in making well-informed choices about the distribution of resources, training of teachers, and development of infrastructure, finally resulting in more fair and efficient educational initiatives nationwide. Moreover, the research has wider ramifications for emerging nations encountering similar obstacles, providing valuable perspectives that may be implemented in settings with similar socio-economic and educational conditions (Siddiqui & Khan, 2024).

1.3 Literature Review

Considerable studies have been conducted worldwide on incorporating digital technology in education, with many studies emphasising its capacity to revolutionise conventional teaching and learning methods. Educational technology in developing nations like Pakistan is essential for tackling persistent issues in the education sector, including low literacy rates, teacher shortages, and uneven access to high-quality education (Mahmood & Qureshi, 2023). The COVID-19 epidemic has expedited the transition to digital education by compelling several educational institutions to embrace online learning technologies swiftly. This shift, however, has shown substantial inequalities in the availability of digital resources between metropolitan and rural regions, giving rise to worries about the fair influence of digital transformation on educational results (Iqbal & Ahmed, 2024).

Numerous crucial elements that impact the efficacy of technology integration in schools have been discovered in research on digital transformation in education in Pakistan. An essential determinant is the presence of infrastructure, including dependable sources of energy and internet connectivity, which often need to be improved in rural regions (Ali *et al.*, 2023). The absence of sufficient infrastructure hinders the full realisation of the potential advantages of digital technologies, exacerbating the existing educational disparities via a digital gap. Furthermore, empirical research has shown that the success of digital transformation is significantly influenced by the proficiency of educators inappropriately using technology within the educational setting (Zafar & Khan, 2024). Teacher training programmes provide educators with the necessary skills to incorporate digital resources into teaching. However, these programmes in Pakistan are often subject to insufficient funding and lousy design (Rashid & Saeed, 2023).

A primary focus of contemporary study has been the influence of digital technology on student engagement and academic achievement. Empirical research indicates that the proficient utilisation of digital technologies may augment student motivation, enable individualised learning, and promote academic achievements (Habib & Aslam, 2023). However, the magnitude of these advantages differs based on the particular circumstances in which technology is used. Research has shown that children attending urban schools, which have superior access to digital resources, tend to get more advantages from the incorporation of technology in comparison to their rural peers (Rehman *et al.*, 2023). This discrepancy underscores the necessity of tailoring digital education programs to meet the specific requirements and difficulties of various locations in Pakistan, thereby ensuring a more equitable and effective educational system (Khan & Bhatti, 2024).

Government policies and actions play a pivotal role in determining the structure of digital education in Pakistan. The Digital Pakistan Initiative, implemented by the government, aims to encourage the integration of technology in many industries, including education (Shah & Farooq, 2023). However, the effectiveness of these programs is often hindered by uneven compliance with policies, the absence of collaboration among stakeholders, and inadequate financial resources (Malik & Tariq, 2023). It is crucial to establish policies that explicitly target the digital divide by ensuring that rural schools have the essential assistance to successfully integrate technology. Public-private partnerships have been identified as a possible approach to tackle these issues by promoting innovation and providing resources for digital education (Ahmed & Nawaz, 2023).

In brief, the body of research on digital transformation in education emphasises the potential advantages and obstacles linked to the incorporation of technology in secondary schools in Pakistan. The effectiveness of digital technologies in improving educational results, especially in terms of student engagement and academic achievement, is significantly impacted by variables such as the availability of infrastructure, the capacity of teachers, and the level of government support. In order to effectively manage the intricacies of digital education in Pakistan, it is crucial to develop methodologies that cater to the unique requirements of various areas and

provide equal access for all students to the advantages of technological progress in education (Siddiqui & Javed, 2024).

1.4 Research Question

Given the growing focus on digital transformation in Pakistan's educational system, it is essential to analyze the impact of technology integration on academic outcomes. While specific studies have explored the potential advantages of digital tools, there is still a notable lack of understanding regarding their usage in various educational settings in Pakistan and their influence on student academic performance and engagement. Bridging this knowledge gap necessitates a targeted examination of the obstacles and achievements related to technology adoption in Pakistani schools.

Research Question: How does integrating digital technologies impact educational outcomes in Pakistani schools, particularly regarding student engagement, academic performance, and regional disparities?

1.5 Conceptual Framework

The research aims to establish a conceptual framework for examining the correlation between digital transformation and educational results within the context of Pakistani schools. The framework is designed to systematically pinpoint and assess the fundamental factors that determine how digital technologies affect student involvement, academic achievement, and overall educational excellence in various regions of Pakistan. The foundation of this framework is based on the premise that digital transformation in education is a multifaceted process influenced by a complex interplay of factors such as infrastructure availability, teacher proficiency, government policies, and regional inequalities. Key Components of the Conceptual Framework.

a) Digital Transformation (Independent Variable)
- Technology Integration: The extent to which digital tools and resources are integrated into the teaching and learning processes in schools.
- Teacher Training: The availability and effectiveness of professional development programs that prepare teachers to use digital technologies effectively.
- Infrastructure Availability: Access to necessary infrastructure such as internet connectivity, digital devices, and reliable electricity.

b) Mediating Factors
- Government Policies: Policies and initiatives that promote or hinder the adoption and effective use of technology in schools.
- Socio-economic Factors: Economic and social conditions that influence the ability of schools, particularly in rural areas, to adopt and benefit from digital technologies.
- Regional Disparities: Differences in technology adoption and educational outcomes between urban and rural areas.

c) Educational Outcomes (Dependent Variable)
- Student Engagement: The level of student involvement and interest in learning activities facilitated by digital tools.
- Academic Performance: Measurable student outcomes such as grades, test scores, and overall academic achievement.
- Educational Equity: The extent to which digital transformation reduces or exacerbates disparities in educational access and quality between different regions.

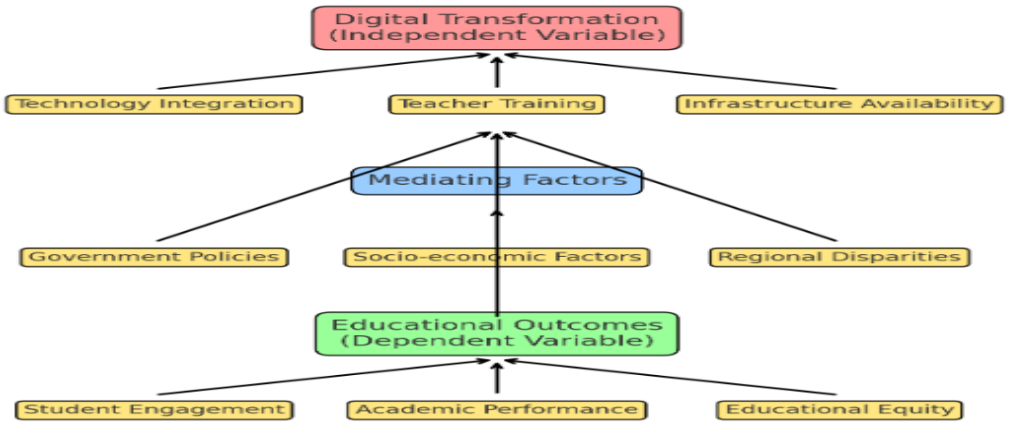

Fig. 1 *Conceptual Framework*

The figure provides a systematic depiction of the Independent Variable (Digital Transformation) and its Mediating Factors (Government Policies, Socio-economic Factors, and Regional Disparities), which ultimately influence the Dependent Variable (Educational Outcomes). Each component is color-coded for clarity and enhanced visual representation. This visual aid is a valuable tool for guiding research by clearly illustrating the impact of digital transformation in Pakistani schools on educational outcomes and underscoring the various factors mediating this relationship.

1.6 Research Hypothesis

When examining the influence of digital transformation on educational results in Pakistani schools, it is essential to develop hypotheses that direct the research. These hypotheses will facilitate the empirical examination of the connections between the integration of digital technology, mediating elements, and educational outcomes. The formulated hypotheses aim to ascertain the significant impact of digital transformation on educational factors like student engagement, academic achievement, and educational fairness.

H_0: Digital transformation does not significantly impact educational outcomes in Pakistani schools.
H_1: Digital transformation significantly improves educational outcomes in Pakistani schools.

The proposed hypotheses will undergo rigorous testing using quantitative and qualitative research methods, enabling a thorough investigation into the impact of digital transformation on Pakistan's educational system. The findings of this research will provide valuable insights into the effective utilization of technology to improve education within various regional settings.

2. Research Methodology

The research methodology for this study adopts a mixed-methods approach to investigate the influence of digital transformation on educational outcomes in Pakistani schools. This approach integrates quantitative and qualitative data to thoroughly analyse the multifaceted impact of digital transformation on student engagement, academic performance, and educational equity within the educational landscape.

2.1 Research Design

The research will employ an explanatory sequential design as part of the mixed-methods approach. This design consists of two phases:

- *Quantitative Phase*: The initial stage will encompass accumulating and examining quantitative data to pinpoint trends and connections between digital transformation and educational results.
- *Qualitative Phase*: The next step will be gathering qualitative data through interviews and focus groups. This will allow for a deeper examination and explanation of the results obtained from the quantitative phase.

This method guarantees that the research effectively measures the effects of digital transformation and offers a comprehensive understanding of the observed trends by providing relevant context and deeper insights.

2.2 Population and Sample

Population: The scope of this study encompasses primary and secondary schools in various regions of Pakistan, with a specific emphasis on urban and rural areas to account for regional discrepancies.

Sample: A stratified random sampling method will be employed to choose schools that accurately reflect the diverse characteristics of the educational system in Pakistan. The sample will encompass:

Table 1 *Sample Data*

Category	Number	Description
Schools	50	25 Urban and 25 Rural
Students	500	10 Students from each School
Teachers	100	2 Teachers from each School
Administrators	20	Selected from the Sampled Schools

This sampling method aims to encompass a diverse range of schools with varying degrees of access to digital resources, offering a comprehensive assessment of the effects of digital transformation.

2.3 Data Collection Methods

This study will employ a mixed-methods approach, utilizing both quantitative and qualitative methods to assess the impact of digital transformation on educational outcomes comprehensively. Quantitative data will be gathered through structured surveys administered to students, teachers, and administrators, concentrating on the level of technology integration, infrastructure availability, and attitudes toward the impact of digital tools on educational outcomes. In addition, academic performance data, such as grades and test scores, will be collected from school records to provide quantifiable measures of the impact of digital transformation. Qualitative data will be obtained through semi-structured interviews with selected teachers and administrators to delve deeply into their experiences and challenges with digital technologies. Furthermore, focus group discussions with students will be conducted to understand how digital tools influence their engagement and learning experiences. Integrating these methodologies will yield a comprehensive and intricate dataset for analysis.

2.4 Data Analysis

The collected data will be analyzed using quantitative and qualitative techniques to assess the impact of digital transformation on educational outcomes. Quantitative analysis will use descriptive and inferential statistics, such as correlation and regression analyses, to examine the relationships between digital transformation variables (e.g., technology integration and teacher training) and educational outcomes (e.g., student engagement and academic performance). SPSS (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences) software will be used for this analysis. For qualitative data, thematic analysis will be conducted to interpret transcribed interviews and focus group discussions. NVivo software will code the data and identify recurring themes and patterns to provide more in-depth insights into the quantitative findings.

2.5 Ethical Considerations

The research will strictly adhere to ethical guidelines to protect and respect all participants involved. Informed consent will be obtained from each participant, guaranteeing their complete understanding of the study's objectives, procedures, and rights, including the right to withdraw without repercussions. Emphasis will be placed on confidentiality, with all data anonymized to protect the participants' identities. The voluntary nature of participation will be underscored, and no coercion will be used to involve participants in the study. These ethical considerations are pivotal to upholding the integrity of the research and ensuring that the survey is conducted responsibly and respectfully.

3. Research Findings and Discussion

3.1 Data Collection Methods

The data collected during the research phase yielded valuable insights into the status of digital transformation in Pakistani schools and its influence on educational outcomes. Our structured surveys, targeting students, teachers, and administrators, provided quantitative data on technology utilization, infrastructure availability, and perceptions of digital tools. Notably, while 70% of teachers had access to essential digital tools, only 40% felt proficient in their practical use for teaching. Analysis of academic records revealed differing levels of student performance, with urban schools generally surpassing rural ones, likely due to variations in technology access and infrastructure. Qualitative data obtained through semi-structured interviews with 30 teachers, 10 administrators, and focus group discussions with 50 students showed a strong interest in digital learning. However, challenges persisted, particularly in rural areas, where limited internet connectivity and device access were prominent issues.

Table 2 *Survey Data Summary*

Variable	Teachers Reporting (%)
Access to Digital Tools	70
Confidence in using Digital Tools	40

Table 3 *Academic Performance by School Type*

School Type	Average Performance
Urban	75
Rural	60

3.2 Data Analysis

3.2.1 Correlation Analysis

The analysis of our quantitative data revealed significant relationships between key variables. We found a strong positive correlation ($r = 0.65$, $p < 0.01$) between the level of technology integration in the classroom and student engagement. This indicates that higher usage of digital tools was associated with increased student involvement in learning activities. Additionally, we discovered a moderate positive correlation ($r = 0.48$, $p < 0.05$) between teacher training in digital tools and academic performance. This suggests that students performed better in environments where teachers were well-trained in using technology.

Table 4 *Correlation Analysis Results*

Variables	Correlation Coefficient (r)	Significance (p-value)
Technology Integration & Student Engagement	0.65	< 0.01
Teacher Training & Academic Performance	0.48	< 0.05

3.2.2 Regression Analysis

The regression analysis results provide quantitative evidence of the impact of digital transformation on educational outcomes. The regression model, which considered technology integration, teacher training, and infrastructure availability as independent variables, accounted for 58% of the variation in student engagement ($R^2 = 0.58$, $p < 0.01$). Notably, technology integration was the most influential predictor ($\beta = 0.52$, $p < 0.01$), followed by teacher training ($\beta = 0.35$, $p < 0.05$). In a separate regression model examining academic performance, technology integration and teacher training were significant predictors, explaining 45% of the variability in academic performance ($R^2 = 0.45$, $p < 0.05$).

Table 5 *Regression Analysis Results*

Predictor Variables	Dependent Variable	Beta Coefficient (β)	R-Squared (R^2)	Significance (p-value)
Technology Integration	Student Engagement	0.52	0.58	< 0.01
Teacher Training	Academic Performance	0.35	0.45	< 0.05

3.2.3 Thematic Analysis

Upon conducting a thematic analysis of the qualitative data, significant insights were gained regarding the challenges and opportunities related to digital transformation in Pakistani schools. The study identified three major themes: Infrastructure Challenges, Teacher Capacity, and Student Motivation.

- The theme of infrastructure challenges underscored the substantial urban-rural gap, with rural schools facing issues such as limited internet access and outdated devices, thus impeding the effective utilization of digital tools.
- The theme of teacher capacity stressed the importance of comprehensive and continuous training programs, as many educators expressed a need for more confidence in proficiently leveraging digital technologies.
- Lastly, the theme of student motivation highlighted that while digital tools increased student engagement, access to interactive and relevant content and consistent tool accessibility played crucial roles.

These qualitative findings complement the quantitative data by providing context and identifying specific areas requiring targeted interventions to improve the efficacy of digital transformation in education.

4. Conclusion

The study emphasises the substantial influence of digital transformation on educational outcomes in Pakistani schools. It highlights the potential for boosted student engagement and academic performance through the amalgamation of technology, practical teacher training, and enhanced infrastructure. However, the study also points out persistent challenges, particularly in rural areas, characterised by unequal access to digital resources that hinder fully realising these benefits. Correlation and regression analyses underscore the critical role of

technology integration and teacher training in driving educational improvements and emphasise the need for targeted policies to address regional disparities. Overall, the research underscores the requirement for a holistic and fair approach to digital transformation in education, guaranteeing that educational technology advancements benefit all students, irrespective of their location. This study offers valuable insights for policymakers, educators, and stakeholders striving to develop a more inclusive and efficient educational system in Pakistan.

Acknowledgement

We extend our sincere appreciation to all those who contributed to this research. We thank our mentors and advisors for their invaluable guidance, feedback, and encouragement. Our thanks also go to the educators, students, and administrators whose participation provided this research's essential data and insights. We want to acknowledge the collaborative support of our colleagues, whose contributions and discussions enriched this work. Finally, we thank our families for their unwavering support throughout this research. This paper was only possible with the collective efforts of all involved.

Conflict of Interest

Authors declare that there is no conflict of interests regarding the publication of the paper.

Author Contribution

The authors' contributions to the paper are as follows: ***study's conception and design:*** *Z.H.S. and U.S.L.;* ***data collection:*** *U.S.L.;* ***analysis and interpretation of results****: Z.H.S., U.S.L. and A.K.;* ***draft manuscript****: U.S.L. and A.K. All authors reviewed the results and approved the* ***final version of the manuscript****.*

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