THE COMFORT TRAP AND THE INFLUENCE OF TECHNOLOGY ON APATHY AMONG PRE-SERVICE TEACHERS

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Abstract
The rapid advancement of technology has reshaped the educational landscape, significantly influencing students' engagement, motivation, and learning behaviours. While technology offers numerous benefits in enhancing accessibility and interactive learning, it has also contributed to a growing sense of apathy among pre-service teachers. This study investigates the impact of technology dependency on student participation in classroom activities, analysing data from 145 students. The objective is to explore how reliance on digital tools influences students' engagement, comfort, and involvement in both online and offline academic settings. The results indicate a significant correlation between technological dependence and student behaviour, with insights suggesting the need for balanced integration of technology in education.
Keywords: *Technology Dependency, Student Participation, Classroom Engagement, Digital Tools, Academic Behaviour.*

Introduction

In recent years, technology has revolutionized educational systems worldwide. While it facilitates learning and simplifies academic tasks, over-dependence on technology may influence students' classroom participation. This study aims to understand students' perspectives on technology usage and its implications for engagement in traditional classroom settings.

Objectives

- To examine the extent of technology dependency among pre-service teachers.
- To assess how technology dependency affects classroom participation and fosters apathy.
- To provide recommendations for balanced technology use in teacher education programs.

Methodology

A quantitative research method was employed, using a structured questionnaire comprising 15 items distributed to 145 pre-service teachers. The data was collected through an online survey and analysed using percentage distribution, t-test, and f-test (ANOVA).

Data Analysis and Interpretation

Demographic Data:

- Total Respondents: 145 students

Percentage Distribution (Sample Questions)

Question	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Q4	23.13%	61.90%	14.29%	0.68%	-
Q5	5.44%	49.66%	26.53%	17.01%	1.36%
Q6	2.04%	21.77%	22.45%	49.66%	4.08%

T-Test Results

Question	t-Statistic	p-Value	Interpretation
Technology simplifies my academic tasks significantly.	-1.895	0.060	Not Significant
I feel uncomfortable when I cannot access technology during study time.	2.345	0.020	Significant ($p < 0.05$)
I avoid participating in classroom activities that do not involve technology.	2.512	0.013	Significant ($p < 0.05$)
I feel a sense of security when I depend on digital resources for learning.	0.716	0.475	Not Significant
I prefer using digital devices over traditional methods (books, notes) for learning.	0.045	0.964	Not Significant
I feel stressed when required to work without digital tools.	1.892	0.061	Not Significant
My dependency on technology affects my engagement in physical classroom activities.	1.089	0.278	Not Significant
I feel disengaged during offline lectures or workshops.	2.271	0.025	Significant ($p < 0.05$)
I participate in classroom tasks only for the sake of attendance or grades.	0.848	0.398	Not Significant

F-Test Results (ANOVA)

Question	F-Statistic	p-Value	Interpretation
Technology simplifies my academic tasks significantly.	3.510	0.063	Not Significant
I feel uncomfortable when I cannot access technology during study time.	5.438	0.021	Significant ($p < 0.05$)
I avoid participating in classroom activities that do not involve technology.	6.202	0.014	Significant ($p < 0.05$)
I feel a sense of security when I depend on digital resources for learning.	0.504	0.479	Not Significant
I prefer using digital devices over traditional methods (books, notes) for learning.	0.002	0.963	Not Significant
I feel stressed when required to work without digital tools.	3.601	0.060	Not Significant
My dependency on technology affects my engagement in physical classroom activities.	1.186	0.278	Not Significant
I feel disengaged during offline lectures or workshops.	5.105	0.026	Significant ($p < 0.05$)
I participate in classroom tasks only for the sake of attendance or grades.	0.720	0.398	Not Significant

Discussion

The findings reveal that a majority of pre-service teachers agree that technology simplifies their academic tasks, and many feel secure relying on digital resources. However, a considerable percentage also report stress and discomfort when required to function without technology. While technology aids learning, it does not entirely hinder engagement in its absence. The results suggest emerging apathy towards traditional learning modes due to over-reliance on digital tools.

Recommendations

- Incorporate blended learning models combining digital and traditional teaching.
- Conduct workshops to develop digital literacy and minimize dependency.
- Encourage group activities and hands-on learning experiences without relying solely on technology.
- Foster awareness about the risks of apathy induced by comfort zones in technology use.

Conclusion

***"The greatest enemy of knowledge is not ignorance; it is the illusion of knowledge."* – Daniel J. Boorstin**

Technology significantly impacts student engagement, with both positive and negative outcomes. Educational institutions must strive for a balanced approach, integrating technology without diminishing traditional learning and participation methods. Addressing apathy requires conscious efforts to motivate pre-service teachers beyond the comfort of technology.

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