

A STUDY ON THE USAGE OF DIGITAL SKILLS AMONG UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS

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Abstract

Digital education offers wider learning accessibility and opportunities to students, and hence, it is very much capable of supplementing a traditional classroom setting. Digital education aims to provide students with broad educational opportunities to learn more. Digital education is currently playing a significant part in rebuilding and rejuvenating the educational framework in India. The objective of the study was to usage of digital skills among undergraduate students made up the population, and a sample of 1500 undergraduate students (both boys and girls) was taken using a stratified random sampling technique. The survey method used in the study. Digital skills were the tool used in this study to gather data. SPSS data analysis utilizing percentage analysis and t-test statistical methods. The findings demonstrated that the high level of undergraduate students in all the dimensions such as communication skill, operational skill, information and navigation skill, social skills, creative skill and mobile usage skill. The results also indicated that the male and female, rural and urban, joint family and nuclear family undergraduate students differ in their usage of digital skills.

Keywords: *Digital Skills, Usage, Undergraduate Students.*

Introduction

Technology, the Internet and intelligent electronic devices have made it possible for students worldwide to gain information and knowledge through digital education. When a student uses digital skills, he can enjoy complete control over the learning period, pace, and place. In India, digital education is gaining popularity and learning and acquiring knowledge using digital devices and technology is the way forward. In India, digital education is the latest method of learning, and due to its immense popularity, it is considered the future of learning and education in India. In the metro cities of India, the education system is undergoing a drastic change in modernization and digitalization. Recently, many international schools, institutions and organizations have been established that are incorporating and effectively implementing many digital education initiatives in their teaching systems, and hence, slowly but steadily, digital education is piercing into the country's education system. The pace of the digital revolution in India is increasing rapidly, bringing new opportunities for commerce, communication, and education. Every year, classrooms are being remodelled and reshaped due to the implementing of the latest technologies in the education sector. Learners and trainers are both quickly getting

familiarised and acquainted with such technologies. The growth of digital education is significant for the success of the digital revolution, which has started in India since digital education would provide a solid base for the current and future generations during their initial years concerning digital methods of doing work, which would eventually lead to a robust digital economy of our country. Digitalisation is the requirement of the present time; it is the outcome of inventions and technological progress. All countries intend to accomplish digitalisation to equip their society more finely. This is because digitalisation boosts productivity and overall efficiency while simultaneously minimising expenses. The introduction of the Internet in India approximately twenty years ago marked the beginning of the digitalisation process in India. Following the launch of the Internet, enterprises in the information technology sector were viewed as having significant worth.

Digital education offers wider learning accessibility and opportunities to students, and hence, it is very much capable of supplementing a traditional classroom setting. Digital education aims to provide students with broad educational opportunities to learn more. Digital education is currently playing a significant part in rebuilding and rejuvenating the educational framework in India. However, the actual capacity of online education was brought to light during the COVID-19 pandemic, when all educational institutions were forced to close, and it was the sole alternative for students to continue their education. Digital education ensured no pause in education delivery, and students could receive education from one of the most qualified educators while remaining in the comfort of their own homes. Right now, digital education is a boon to students and will significantly impact future generations. There is a large amount of untapped potential for incorporating technology into the education sector thanks to the emergence and development of innovative technologies such as cloud computing, augmented reality and virtual data centres (Pyshkin S. et al., 2021).

Review of Related Literature

Perifanou et al. (2021) provides rich evidence on students' levels of digital skills and their frequency of Internet and social media use. Several studies have examined the relationships between social media use and academic achievement. However, there are no studies investigating the relationships between social media use and the digital skills of higher education students. To fill this research gap, this study examines the links between the frequency of social media use and students' digital skills. The survey was conducted with 155 university students in Greece. The instrument on six digital skills components was evaluated in terms of reliability and consistency. The research findings reveal a strong positive association between the use of YouTube and students' digital skills on content evaluation and protection. Age and educational level differences were noted in several digital skills components, whereas age and gender were related to the frequency of Instagram use. The main conclusion is that the generic use of Facebook and Instagram does not affect students' digital skills. However, combined literature evidence implies that when

social media are used for educational purposes, they might influence students' perceived levels of digital skills. Implications and limitations are discussed in the study.

Dennen et al. (2023) survey of 350 college students examines how they use an array of online platforms for everyday life information-seeking purposes, including the frequency with which they engage in different networked knowledge activities. Findings show that while students often use platforms associated with personal networking, such as Instagram, professional platforms like LinkedIn are less commonly used. Students are much more likely to engage in passive online activities than active ones. In particular, skills related to tagging, writing, and creation are infrequently used. Additionally, about half of these college students do not believe social media, which fosters these networked knowledge activities, is relevant to their careers. These findings show opportunities for better-developing college students' digital skill sets, with guidance for skills that might be targeted, taught together, and supported through learning activities in online spaces to prepare college students for digital information tasks in the workplace.

Need for the Study

Digital education is the future landscape of education and learning in India. Most educational institutions in India are progressively adopting digital teaching technologies and attempting to create a more inclusive and interactive classroom atmosphere. There is a growing trend in Indian higher educational institutions and universities to promote the use of technology to enhance the learning experience for all students, regardless of background or ability. A fascinating combination of information and entertainment in digital education makes it more practical, applicable and relevant to our daily lives. Digital and live virtual classrooms have grown significantly in India during the past few years. So the present study aims to find the usage of digital skills among the undergraduate students.

Operational Definition of the Terms

Awareness - Awareness refers to the knowledge or perception of a situation, fact or existence or something it involves being conscious of your surrounding, feelings, thoughts or the presence of others. Awareness can also relate to understanding or recognizing the importance of certain issues such as environmental awareness or social awareness it is a state of being alert and mindful, either in a general sense or about a specific topic or situation.

Digital skills - defined as the ability to effectively and proficiently utilize digital tools and technologies are personal, academic, and professional purposes. In the present study communication skills, operational skills, information navigation skills, social skills and creative skills, and mobile usage skills are considered for finding the digital skills of undergraduate students.

Undergraduate Students - Undergraduate students are individuals who are pursuing a bachelor's degree or an associate's degree at a college or university. They have typically

completed high school (or its equivalent) and are enrolled in a post-secondary educational institution but have not yet earned a degree.

Objectives of the Study

The following are the objectives of the present study

- To find the level of usage of digital skills among undergraduate students.
- To find the significant difference in the usage of digital skills among undergraduate students.

Hypothesis of the Study

The following are the hypotheses of the present study.

- The level of undergraduate students' usage of digital skills will be at moderate level.
- There is a significant difference in the usage of digital skills among undergraduate students based on their sub-samples gender, locality, family type, type of institution, and stream of study.

Research Methodology

- **Method** -In this present study normative survey method was adopted.
- **Sample & Sampling technique**- for the present study 1500 undergraduate students was selected through a stratified random sampling technique from Salem district in Tamilnadu.
- **Tool used for the study**- The tool used for the present study was developed by the investigator. The title of the tool was "Digital Skills Scale". The tool consists of 35 items with five-point scale and with six dimensions as communication skills, information navigation skill, social skill, creative skill and mobile usage skill. The reliability of the tool was established through the test-retest method with a score of 0.86 and through this the consistency of the scale was established.

Analysis and Interpretation

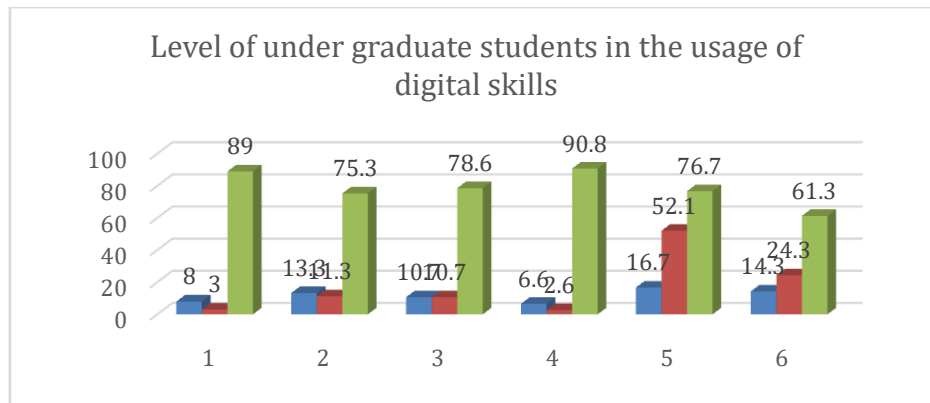
Hypothesis 1

The level of usage of digital skills among undergraduate students will be at a moderate level

Table 1 Shows the Level of Usage of Digital Skills among Undergraduate Students

S. No.	Dimensions	Low		Moderate		High	
		No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
1.	Communication Skill	120	8	45	3	1335	89
2.	Operation Skill	200	13.3	170	11.3	1330	75.3
3.	Information Navigation Skill	160	10.7	161	10.7	1179	78.6
4.	Social Skill	99	6.6	39	2.6	1362	90.8
5.	Creative Skill	251	16.7	99	52.1	1150	76.7
6.	Mobile Usage Skill	215	14.3	365	24.3	920	61.3

The above table shows the high level of undergraduate students in all the dimensions such as communication skill, operational skill, information and navigation skill, social skills, creative skill and mobile usage skill.



Graph 1 Shows the Level of Undergraduate Students in the Usage of Digital Skills

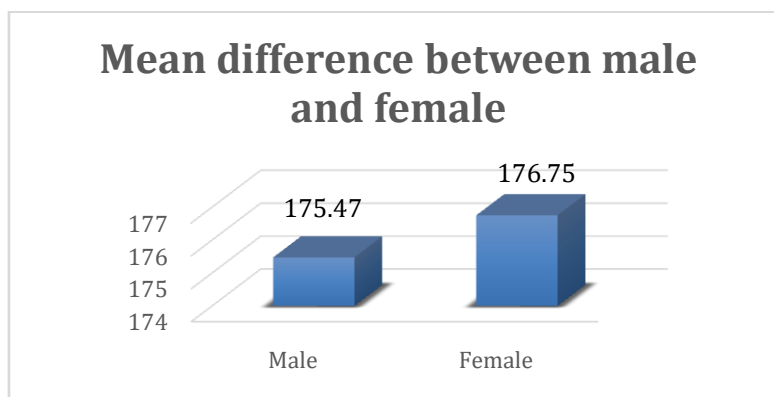
Hypothesis 2

Male and female undergraduate students differ in their usage of digital skills.

Table 2 Shows the Mean Difference between Male and Female Undergraduate Students in the Usage of Digital Skill

Variable	Sub Sample	Number	Mean	SD	t' Value	Level of significance
Gender	Male	536	175.47	3.845	6.591	Significant
	Female	964	176.75	3.116		

From the above table, it is inferred that the calculated value is higher than the table value at the 0.05 level of significance. The female undergraduate students' mean score is higher than that of the male undergraduate students. Hence, the formulated hypothesis is accepted, and it is concluded that male and female undergraduate students differ in their usage of digital skills.



Graph 2 Shows the Mean Difference between Male and Female Undergraduate Students' usage of Digital Skills

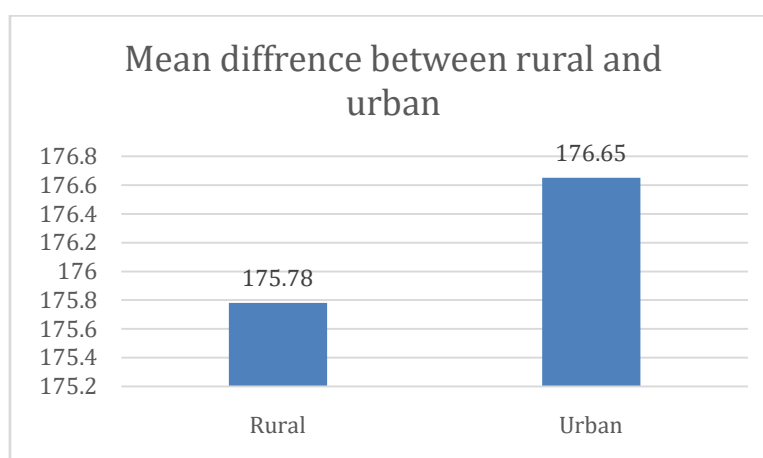
Hypothesis-3

Rural and urban undergraduate student differ in their usage of digital skills

Table 3 Shows the Mean Difference between Rural and Urban Undergraduate Students in Usage of Digital Skill

Variable	Sub sample	Number	Mean	SD	t Value	Level of Significance
Locality	Rural	621	175.78	3.601	4.786	Significant
	Urban	879	176.65	3.290		

From the above table, it is inferred that the calculated value is higher than the table value at the 0.05 level of significance. The mean score of urban undergraduate students is higher than that of rural undergraduate students. Hence, the formulated hypothesis is accepted, and it is concluded that rural and urban undergraduate students differ in their usage of digital skills.



Graph: 3 Shows the Mean Difference Between Rural and Urban Undergraduate Students' Usage Of Digital Skills

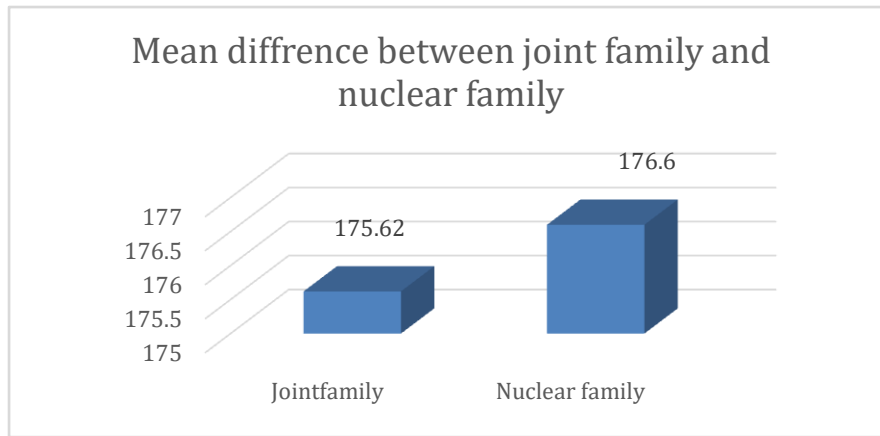
Hypothesis-4

Joint family and nuclear family undergraduate students differ in their usage of digital skills.

Table 4 Shows the Mean Difference between Join Family and Nuclear Family Undergraduate Students in the Usage of Digital Skills

Variable	Sub sample	Number	Mean	SD	t Value	Level of significance
Family type	Joint Family	470	175.62	3.805	4.844	Significant
	Nuclear Family	1030	176.60	3.228		

From the above table, it is inferred that the calculated value is higher than the table value at 0.05 level of significance. The Nuclear family undergraduate students' mean score is higher than the joint family undergraduate students. Hence the formulated hypothesis is accepted and it is concluded that joint family and nuclear family undergraduate students differ in their usage of digital skills.



Graph: 4 Shows the Mean Difference between Joint Family and Nuclear Family Undergraduate Students' Usage in Digital Skills

Main Findings of the Study

- Male and female undergraduate students differ in their usage of digital skills.
- Rural and urban undergraduate students differ in their usage of digital skills.
- Joint family and nuclear-family undergraduate students differ in their usage of digital skills.

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