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A Study on the Impact of Digital Technology on Student Learning and Academic Performance

Charuhasini P[1], Harish T[2], Dr. P. Ganeshan[3]
[1]*Bachelor of Technology in Artificial Intelligence and Data Science, Sri Eshwar College of Engineering, Coimbatore, Tamil Nadu, India*
[2]*Bachelor of Engineering in Mechanical Engineering, Sri Eshwar College of Engineering, Coimbatore, Tamil Nadu, India*
[3]*Professor, Department of Mechanical Engineering, Sri Eshwar College of Engineering, Coimbatore, Tamil Nadu , India*

Abstract: ***The modern education system has been deeply affected by digital technology, resulting in a paradigm shift in the manner in which students learn, acquire knowledge, and do well academically. This paper seeks to analyze the impact of digital technology in improving students' learning and academic success. This research shall be carried out using a questionnaire that would seek responses from university students concerning their use of digital technology, such as smartphones, laptops, online learning, learning applications, and the internet. This research paper presents both the pros and cons of digital technology usage in education. Digital technology makes learning material easily accessible and understandable. However, over-reliance on digital technology may lead to distraction and inability to concentrate.***
From the above analysis, it is clear that the use of digital technology brings about both advantages and disadvantages in terms of learning and academic success. It is noteworthy that the effective use of technology through self-control and discipline will be essential in ensuring that the positive impacts of technology are felt in the education sector.
Keywords: Digital Technology, Academic Performance, Student Learning, Distance Learning, Educational Technology Application, Online Learning, Digital Learning Environment, Students' Behavior, Technology-Based Education, Learning Results

I. INTRODUCTION

In recent years, due to the development of technology, technology has become a crucial element in the field of education, which has facilitated the creation of learning styles for the students. This style becomes highly sophisticated due to the quick technological advancement that is seen in technologies such as mobile phones, laptops, internet facilities, and virtual learning systems. Therefore, students can easily access unlimited learning materials like video lectures, e-books, and web-based courses.

The use of platforms such as YouTube and Google classroom, as well as other applications providing online classes, have made the process of learning more convenient and engaging, enabling the learners to pursue studies according to their convenience. In addition, the availability of tools related to artificial intelligence and search engines facilitates fast and effective search for information. This aspect has been facilitated by technology. One more contribution made by digital technology in relation to learning is collaboration in learning.

Incorporating technology into the process of education became even more important after the outbreak of the COVID-19 virus as a result of which the whole world witnessed that online learning had become the new mode of education across the globe. The use of digital platforms continued the educational process for the learners without any breaks or disruptions. As a consequence, students have become more reliant on digital technologies to attend classes, complete assignments, sit for online tests, and access educational content. There are different advantages that can be reaped by students through online education including flexibility, convenience, cost effectiveness, and better learning experiences. Through online education, the students will get an opportunity to view previous classes taught, have easy access to educational material from anywhere around the world and enhance their competencies through online certifications. However, while online education comes with many advantages, it is not devoid of any problems either. Overexposure to digital gadgets may bring about the problem of being easily distracted and the inability to concentrate on studies. Besides, the learner is more dependent on the source of information online without necessarily grasping the subject conceptually. Engaging in the use of social media during learning times is a great distraction. Constant use of digital devices may affect the health of a student including eyesight problems, stress, lack of enough rest and insufficient physical activity. Finally, there is abuse of the use of the gadget for other activities. Some students spend most of their time on entertainment apps, games, and social networking websites.

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With that in mind, it becomes important to analyze the impacts that digital technology creates on students' learning experience as well as their academic performance, considering both positive and negative aspects. In this research paper, I will discuss the impact of digital technology on students' learning behavior and academic performance, trying to understand whether the use of technology leads to academic success or failure.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

A. Digital Technology in Education

There have been notable changes in the education sector due to digital technology because it is making traditional forms of education obsolete. In the past, education was dependent on classroom teachings, books, and written notes. Digital technology such as phones, laptops, tablets, smartboards, software apps, and online learning platforms are contributing towards making the learning process student-centered and flexible.

Many scholars have expressed the opinion that digital technology enhances student engagement and participation in learning activities. Learning is made more interesting through visual and interactive material available through educational platforms. Video lectures, animations, quiz, and simulation are some examples of material that engages students in the learning process.

Learning is also self-paced in the sense that students are free to revise any topic several times depending on how they understand the concept. The learning process becomes convenient for students because they can learn at anytime from anywhere, and therefore digital technology has become a critical component of education today.

B. Impact on Academic Performance

Several empirical studies have been conducted in relation to the influence of digital technology utilization on the performance of learners academically. According to these studies, students who utilize digital technology tools effectively exhibit better academic performance. The availability of learning materials online allows students to access these materials easily, helping them finish their coursework and prepare well for exams.

Digital technologies also offer instantaneous access to information, allowing students to clear doubts instantly. Discussion forums and collaborative learning tools are instrumental in promoting academic success through interaction among students.

Nevertheless, prior studies also indicate that over-reliance on digital devices could adversely affect learners' academic success. Excessive utilization of digital technology platforms such as social media sites, games, and entertainment apps reduces students' focus, thereby affecting their productivity and performance. Over-reliance on these tools might affect students' ability to think critically and learn independently.

C. Role of Online Learning Platforms

Online learning platforms have gained great importance in the modern-day education system. Platforms like Google Classroom, Coursera, Udemy, YouTube, Microsoft Teams, and Zoom are used extensively by both the learners and academic institutions for their teaching and learning processes. According to various research studies, online learning platforms offer improved accessibility and convenience in education. Learners can take virtual classes, watch recorded lectures, submit homework online, and even participate in discussions without any geographical constraints. Moreover, online platforms make available diversified learning opportunities provided by experts from all around the globe, thereby improving the quality of learning process. Interactive and visualized learning is another important benefit offered by these platforms where students are enabled to grasp concepts much easily using video demos, presentation, animations, and digital assessments rather than plain textbooks. Lastly, online platforms also facilitate ongoing learning and development of new skills through online certifications and training courses.

However, some major drawbacks associated with online learning include internet problems, limited teacher-student interaction, and lack of classroom discipline.

D. Distraction and Overuse of Technology

Despite all the advantages brought about by the digital technology, there are some downsides associated with it. The primary disadvantage noted from past literature is the issue of distraction brought about by overreliance on digital devices. Students use mobile phones and laptops to access the internet and engage in non-study activities such as playing games, watching entertaining videos, communicating through chat platforms, and accessing social media websites.

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Continuous notification and multitasking tend to lower the attention span of learners and bring about procrastination among learners. Continuous engagement with entertainment apps may result in poor time management among students. The amount of time students spend on entertainment sites is significantly higher than the one spent undertaking academic activities.

Consequently, this will negatively impact students' academic performance. Apart from the distraction problem, misuse of technology can cause health complications among students such as vision problems, stress, anxiety, lack of sleep, and low physical activity among others. This problem is mainly associated with smartphone and social networking platform addiction by students.

Consequently, researchers recommend moderation when using technology in learning activities.

E. Summary of Literature Findings

From the general overview of existing literature, it becomes clear that there are both positive and negative influences of digital technology on students' learning and academic achievements. The majority of scientific articles claim that technology makes it easier to gain access to educational materials, helps achieve flexibility in the learning process, increases communication, and boosts students' engagement.

On the other hand, some experts point out negative aspects associated with the misuse of technology, such as distractions, lack of focus, addiction to technological gadgets, and poor academic self-discipline. Thus, it can be concluded that the efficacy of digital technology greatly depends on responsible behavior and appropriate guidelines.

It means that educational establishments, teachers, and students need to collaborate in order to facilitate the effective and productive use of digital technology in academic activities.

III. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The primary goals of this research include the following:

1) This goal involves exploring the frequency of the use of electronic gadgets, such as smartphones, laptops, tablets, and Internet sites for educational activities. In addition, it entails identifying the different sources of digital materials that learners rely on in their studies.

2) This goal is concerned with finding out whether the availability of digital technologies contributes to the learners' understanding of ideas and efficient accomplishment of their assignments in learning institutions.

3) This goal involves evaluating the impact of the application of digital technologies on student academic achievement, efficiency in learning, examination results, and other educational outcomes.

4) This research will be concentrated on positive aspects like improved access to educational content, flexibility, good communication, pace of studying, and increasing students' engagement via digital technologies.

5) This study is focused on the problems that result from heavy use of technology, including distraction, online addiction, inability to concentrate, bad time management, and reliance on online sources.

6) This research will help to establish what kinds of digital tools do students prefer to use in their studying process and what effects do their behavior and attitudes have on digital learning.

7) To reveal the impact of online learning platforms on student engagement.

8) To offer effective approaches to using digital technology reasonably and responsibly.

IV. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

A. Research Design

This research uses a descriptive research design to examine the effects of digital technology on the learning process and student performance.

Descriptive research is chosen for this study because it will help us understand and explain the behaviors, attitudes, and experiences of students concerning digital technology and its application in the educational process. This study attempts to identify the ways digital technology affects academic activities, the effectiveness of learning, the level of concentration, and general educational outcomes.

This type of research design primarily relies on gathering data from the respondents through a questionnaire. No manipulation of variables or creation of controlled conditions will take place in this study.

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B. Study Area and Sample

This research will be carried out on college students in the context of an academic institution setting. The sample group will include undergraduates who actively utilize digital technology in the form of smartphones, laptops, tablets, e-learning sites, and learning apps in order to facilitate learning.

Convenience sampling will be used in the selection of respondents as it ensures that we can easily access our respondents during the limited period and budgetary resources at hand. The sample size will consist of about 50 to 100 students from different academic levels and majors. Undergraduates who have frequent experience using digital learning sites will be selected to participate in the study. The data will be primary and will be collected directly from the respondents.

C. Analytical Tools

Data collection tools will be analyzed using basic statistical and graphical techniques to facilitate interpretation of the findings obtained from this research. Tools used in analyzing data for this study include percentage analysis, bar charts, pie charts, tabulation, and Microsoft Excel.

Percentage analysis will be done to determine the proportion of responses provided by students as well as comparing various opinions about digital technology. Bar charts and pie charts will be used to graphically represent data collected through surveys.

Microsoft Excel software will be utilized in organizing and calculating data collected during data collection phase of this research. Graphical and statistical analyses will assist in drawing important conclusions regarding the influence of digital technology on the academic learning behavior of students.

This analytical process will enable the researcher to find out how students view digital learning systems, the frequency of usage of digital technologies for educational purposes, and the positive or negative impacts of such digital technology on academic achievements.

V. FINDINGS AND ANALYSIS

A. Respondent file

Table 6.1: Demographic Profile of Respondents (N = 100)

Demographic Variable	Category	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Gender	Male	55	55%
	Female	45	45%
Age Group	18–20 years	40	40%
	21–23 years	50	50%
	Above 23 years	10	10%
Level of Education	First Year	25	25%
	Second Year	30	30%
	Third Year	25	25%
	Final Year	20	20%

Table 6.1 provides the demographic data of respondents who participated in the survey. It is pertinent to note that the research comprised 100 participants including college students of different years. In this regard, 55% were male college students while 45% were female students. From an age perspective, 40% of students fell in the category of 18-20 years old whereas 50% of students were in the age range of 21-23 years old. 10% of respondents were older than 23 years. It implies that respondents are undergraduate students who utilize information technology for academic purposes.

B. Usage of Digital Technology Among Students

Table 6.2: Frequency of Digital Technology Usage

Usage Pattern	Category	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Daily Usage	Yes	72	72%
	No	28	28%
Hours Spent per Day	Less than 2 hours	20	20%
	2-5 hours	55	55%
	More than 5 hours	25	25%

Digital technology use by students is provided in Table 6.2. From the analysis, it is evident that 72% of the students use digital technology on a daily basis for educational purposes, whereas 28% of the students use it occasionally. This proves that digital technology has become an integral part of the modern-day learning process.

From the analysis, it is apparent that 55% of the students utilize between 2-5 hours of their time daily on digital technology for educational purposes. About 25% of the students take more than 5 hours each day, while 20% of the students take less than 2 hours each day on digital technology for educational purposes. It means that the students have become dependent on digital technology such as online classes, applications, e-books, and the internet for education.

C. Impact on Academic Performance

Table 6.3: Effect of Digital Technology on Academic Performance

Response	Category	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Improvement in Performance	yes	60	60%
	no	40	40%
Better Understanding of Concepts	yes	68	68%
	no	32	32%

The impact of digital technology on the academic performance of the students is presented in Table 6.3. According to the findings, 60% of the participants reported that digital technology impacts the academic performance of the students positively, while 40% of them do not think that it has any significant effect.

Furthermore, 68% of the participants have indicated that digital learning has helped them understand the concepts or the subjects easily. But, only 32% of the students have denied this point. It can be concluded from this data that digital technology has a positive impact on the academic performance of the students because it provides access to all kinds of study material such as recorded classes and educational videos, etc.

Thus, it becomes obvious that the use of digital technology has an effective impact on the academic performance of the students.

D. Distraction and Negative Effects

Table 6.4: Negative Effects of Digital Technology

Factor	Category	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Distraction during Study	Yes	58	58%
	No	42	42%
Social Media Interference	High	45	45%
	Moderate	35	35%
	Low	20	20%

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Table 6.4 shows the negative impacts associated with digital technology use by students. According to the data, 58% of the participants face distractions during their studies because of using digital gadgets, while 42% indicated no significant distractions.
When it comes to social media distraction, 45% of the participants reported high social media impact on their concentration and study skills. About 35% of the participants faced moderate social media impact, while 20% were under low social media distraction. These results suggest that while digital technologies facilitate studying, overusing such gadgets and being addicted to social media reduces concentration, time management, and academic discipline.

E. Analysis and Interpretation

From the above tables, it can be seen that the majority of students (72%) make use of digital technology every day in their studies. The majority of students (60%) feel that the use of digital technology has helped in improving their academic results and understanding of concepts.
On the other hand, from the table, it can also be seen that 58% of students get distracted when using digital technology owing to social media and other activities that are unrelated to education. It can thus be concluded that although digital technology helps enhance learning capabilities, improper use may result in a lack of concentration.

VI. BARRIERS TO EFFECTIVE USE OF DIGITAL TECHNOLOGY

A. Digital Distraction and Social Media Usage

One of the biggest hurdles to hinder learning is distraction through social media channels like Instagram, YouTube, Facebook, WhatsApp, and gaming apps. Though gadgets are extensively utilized for educational purposes, learners tend to divert their focus from studying to recreational and social interaction purposes. Constant alerts, online chats, short videos, and gaming applications distract individuals and cause interruptions while studying. Students frequently spend a considerable period of time scrolling through social media channels during study sessions. Such practices result in decreased efficiency and poor learning outcomes. Students also tend to lack proper time management skills, which ultimately lead to unfinished assignments.

B. Overdependence on Digital Tools

The other significant barrier in this context is growing dependence on technological gadgets to perform academic tasks and access required information. Most of the students have become highly dependent on online sources, searching facilities, various educational applications, and even software based on artificial intelligence to perform assignments, note-taking, and problem-solving. Although all this makes it easier to get the required information,
students tend to look for direct solutions rather than comprehend concepts and solve tasks on their own. As a result, students' capacity to think analytically, reason, and find solutions by themselves becomes underdeveloped. Moreover, this high dependence on technological gadgets might undermine students' confidence in more conventional ways of learning.

C. Lack of Digital Discipline

A problem associated with the lack of digital discipline can also be cited as a problem that makes technology less useful in educational processes. Students fail to control their screen time and indulge themselves in activities that are not related to their studies. The improper use of technology by changing between learning material and entertainment applications distracts students from their studies and reduces the effectiveness of learning process. The most common problem among students who use digital technologies is that they do several activities simultaneously, such as attending classes online and at the same time visiting entertainment websites or social media pages. This kind of multitasking negatively impacts their productivity, and results in poor grades. The improper use of digital technologies can also impact students' daily routine and sleeping schedule, because late-night activity on screens increases fatigue.

D. Health Issues Due to Excessive Screen Time

Overuse of technology during online classes and entertainment has resulted in several health concerns for students. The constant use of the screen for many hours causes vision problems, eye strain, headaches, and neck pain. Improper body posture and usage of laptop computers have contributed to many student health problems.
Besides the health effects on the body, overuse of technology also poses several mental challenges. Such activities increase the risk of stress, poor sleeping habits, anxiety, and lack of physical exercise. Lack of sleep because of using mobile phones negatively impacts learning.

E. Lack of Proper Guidance in Digital Learning

Digital education necessitates proper guidance and help by the teacher or even institutions and the parents. Unfortunately, most learners are not adequately trained for the effective application of digital technology for educational purposes. The absence of proper training makes it possible for them to rely on wrong websites and wrong sources of information.

Most learners are not aware of the ways to apply internet effectively for their educational development. They are busy with irrelevant things in cyberspace instead of applying educational applications and digital libraries properly.

VII. PROPOSED BALANCED DIGITAL LEARNING FRAMEWORK (BDLF)

A. Structured Digital Learning Schedule

Students need to stick to a sensible timetable while studying with the help of digital technologies. Good time management will allow the learners to manage their educational tasks and lives in an efficient manner. The students can dedicate particular time for attending classes virtually, working on the assignment tasks, reviewing the subjects, and engaging in leisure activities.

Such a timetable will enable the students to minimize their exposure to screens and avoid using social networking apps and entertainment software when studying. Disciplined study habits are likely to ensure good academic results among the students. Educational organizations and parents can also motivate the students to create a study timetable for themselves.

B. Integration of Guided Digital Learning

The educational institutions need to offer appropriate guidance to the learners in respect of the effective use of the digital learning platforms and resources in education. The teachers play a significant role in assisting the students in identifying the right websites, applications, online courses, and AI-powered learning tools that aid in academic development.

Digital learning guided by professionals allows the learners to direct their attention to productive and academic resources and not entertainment. The institutions can hold workshops and awareness programs to enhance the comprehension of digital learning techniques among the learners. The teachers also can motivate the students to explore the digital learning resources.

The proper guidance ensures that the learners make use of digital technology appropriately for the betterment of their academics and knowledge levels.

C. Blended Learning Approach

A blend of learning refers to an integration of conventional teaching in classrooms together with the use of digital technology. The method ensures that the learner is able to take advantage of classroom teaching as well as the application of technology in education. The blend makes learning more appealing to students due to the inclusion of visual aids, recordings, online examinations, and interactive activities. Also, learners can go back to their lessons whenever they wish due to digital material, hence improved concept understanding and academic success.

It ensures that a proper blend is made between the utilization of technology and traditional methods of teaching.

D. Monitoring and Self-Regulation Mechanism

There should be an encouragement of the students to manage and regulate their use of digital devices for the purpose of avoiding any distractions and too much screen time. Self-regulation is a critical aspect that helps in ensuring that one remains focused and disciplined when engaging in online learning. There are several digital devices as well as applications that help in the management of one's screen time, notifications, and usage of non-educational apps. This helps individuals realize their unnecessary digital consumption and work on ways to minimize it. It can also be supported by parents as well as teachers. Having the capability to regulate oneself and become aware of one's digital behavior is essential in helping an individual reduce distractions that may be associated with social media, gaming, and entertainment apps.

E. Development of Digital Literacy Skills

Digital literacy skills are critical for students in the current learning environment. Digital literacy involves training students to use technology, internet platforms, and other digital mediums for academic reasons. The abilities include searching for credible information, evaluating information on the internet, using educational software, and avoiding misinformation.

Institutions need to run digital literacy courses to ensure that students understand how to use the internet in a secure and constructive way. This involves learning to recognize genuine academic information sources, communicating in a professional manner via digital means, and applying technology towards educational growth and development.

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Improving digital literacy skills improves education levels, builds academic self-confidence, and allows students to capitalize on technology.

F. Health-Conscious Digital Usage

It is essential to engage in health-conscious practices when using digital technology to avoid any health issues that may arise due to excessive screen time usage. Learners are advised to make sure that they take breaks during their virtual learning sessions to prevent physical and mental strains.

For instance, learners can engage in the 20-20-20 technique, which involves shifting the gaze away from the screen after 20 minutes to a 20-feet-away object for 20 seconds. It is essential to practice good body postures and use comfortable seats while maintaining a balanced sleeping schedule and avoiding night-time exposure to screens.

Physical exercises, outdoor activities, and proper sleeping patterns will enhance the learners' well-being and increase their productivity.

VIII. RECOMMENDATIONS

1) Students must use digital technology for educational reasons, not spending too much time playing around in their leisure apps and social networking sites during study time. Utilization of digital technology for online learning, educational and research work, watching videos on digital technologies for educational purposes, doing homework, and skill development programs would definitely help in increasing efficiency and performance levels of students.
2) Education institutions like colleges and schools should offer structured digital learning programs that integrate the traditional form of teaching with technological education. There must be training and awareness programs in these institutions about utilizing technological educational programs and applications effectively for better academic results. Schools and colleges should encourage students to learn with the help of reliable resources, which may include technical assistance too.
3) Regular awareness programs should be organized for informing students about the positive and negative aspects of the use of digital technology. Programs should focus on proper utilization of digital gadgets and preventing technology addictions. Moreover, awareness programs should emphasize on cyber safety and online privacy management. It will help students in using technology in an appropriate manner.
4) Parents and educators should continuously supervise the digital behavior and activities of the learners in order to ensure that they do not engage themselves in excessive social networking or playing games online. Moreover, educators should motivate them towards engaging in academic activities online rather than other non-educational tasks whereas the parents should motivate them towards healthy study habits and balanced daily schedules.
5) Learners should adopt an appropriate combination of digital and non-digital techniques of education in order to improve their educational development because although digital technology has many advantages, yet the traditional mode of learning with textbooks, class discussions, and direct interaction with the teachers is also essential for acquiring theoretical concepts and effective communication skills.
6) Students should adopt healthy practices while using digital technology by minimizing the time on screen and taking breaks in between learning online. The educational institutes should make them aware about issues such as maintaining proper eyesight, sitting posture, physical exercise, and good mental health associated with long hours on digital devices.
7) The government and educational institutions must encourage the creation of digital infrastructure and ensure that all students have access to such facilities in their education. Provision of cheap internet facilities, availability of e-libraries, use of smart classes, and various educational software could increase the effectiveness of the learning process for students.
8) Students must also be encouraged to acquire digital literacy and critical thinking when using the Internet. They need to learn how to find authentic information and think critically about everything posted on the Web. Digital literacy will enable students to make better use of technology in education and future careers.

IX. CONCLUSION

The present research highlights the criticality of digital technology in enhancing the quality of learning experience and academic performance of students in the current education system. The proliferation of smartphones, laptops, internet, e-learning software, and other applications has revolutionized conventional learning practices and replaced them with more innovative, efficient, and interactive processes. Digital technology has provided students with easy access to study material, participation in virtual learning sessions, and interaction within the virtual platform to understand the academic concept better with the help of interactive and visual learning methods.

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According to the results, digital technology has a positive impact on academic performance through self-paced learning, improved communication channels among students and educators, and provision of diverse learning resources. Online platforms such as Google Classroom, YouTube, Coursera, and other e-learning websites have become an essential part of learning in today's world.

Nonetheless, this study reveals some difficulties that occur as a result of abusing digital technology. Social media distractions, video games, and other forms of entertainment make students lack concentration, become less productive, and fail to manage their time properly. Moreover, reliance on technology may decrease thinking skills and ability to understand complex concepts. Also, long hours spent in front of the computer cause numerous health problems like eye strain, stress, poor sleep quality, and physical inactivity.

It is important to highlight that positive outcomes of using digital technology will occur only if the students use digital tools in a responsible and efficient manner. This approach will allow students to receive maximum benefit from technology but avoid negative consequences at the same time.

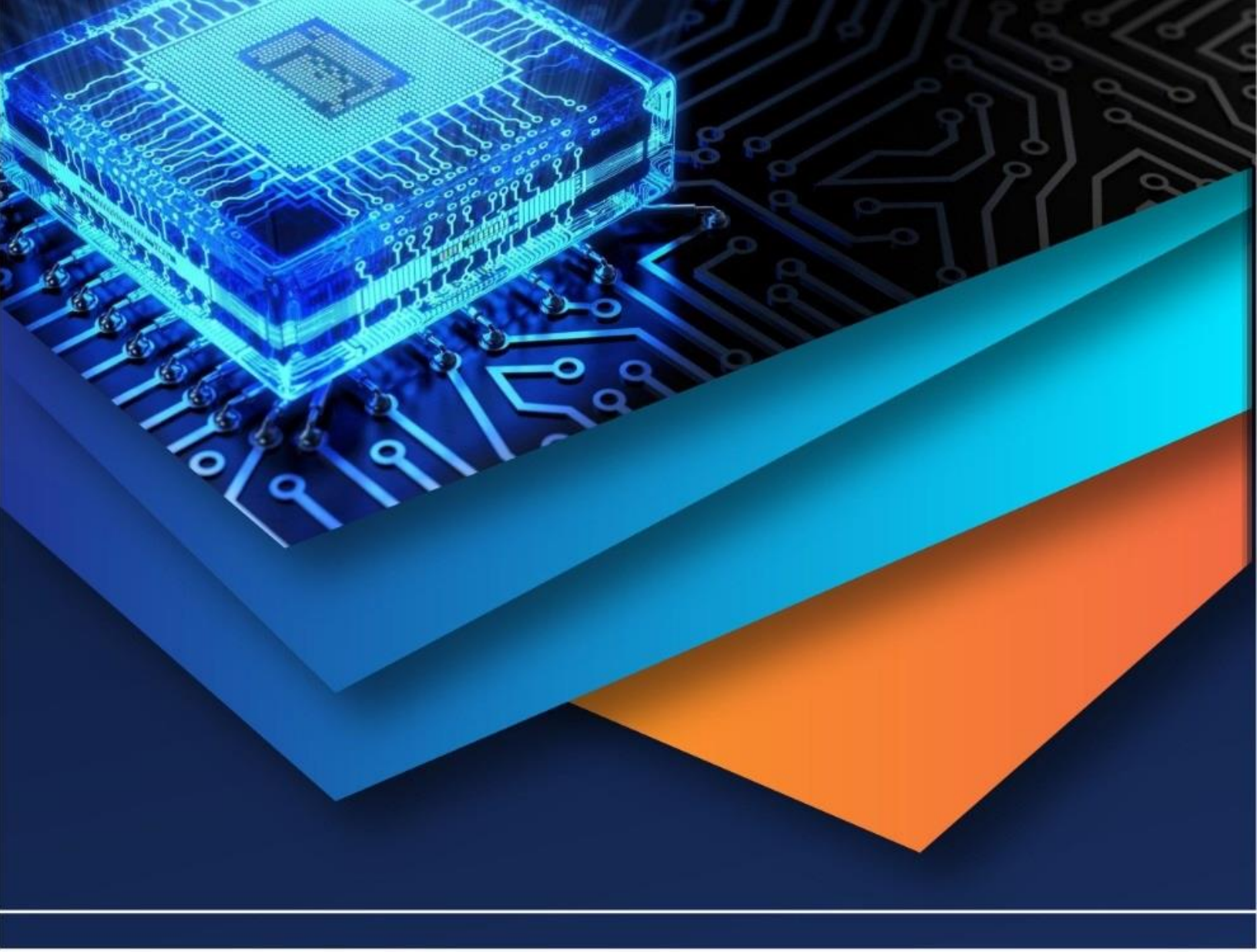
Education facilities, educators, and parents also have a vital role in ensuring that the students learn how to use the technology effectively and responsibly. The right training and awareness programs in conjunction with learning activities will enable students to make appropriate use of digital media for their academic progress and development.

In conclusion, digital technology has the power to make education much more efficient and innovative when used properly. It is through such a combination of old-fashioned learning techniques and new digital means that students can achieve greater success in the future.

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