

## USE OF DIGITAL TOOLS TO ENHANCE TEACHING AND LEARNING

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***Annotation.** Technology-enhanced learning has become a common feature in education globally. Being a novelty for many, it brought some speculations, uncertainties among teachers. However, integrating digital tools in classes has myriads of benefits in case it is performed through prior, thoughtful preparation taking on board student needs, interests, abilities, and perceptions. Incorporating social and emotional activities that promote critical thinking and boost their collaboration can foster student interaction and trigger their interest.*

***Keywords:** integrating digital tools, Verbal-Linguistic Intelligence, Logical-Mathematical Intelligence.*

**Introduction.** Efficiency and engagement are considered to be the most critical components of teaching and learning. Good teachers have always been striving for maximizing student involvement and their quality participation with the help of various teaching techniques and strategies. Empowering students to fully participate in a technology-rich society has become an integral part of modern, up-to-date education for both, traditional and remote classes as well. It has not been long since we all have switched to technology-driven classes due to the urgent circumstances unexpectedly drawn to us. However, teacher response appeared to be different across the globe, though the hard work, perseverance, and the urge for modern-era education have led educators to embrace the challenges they have never experienced before. Namely, the incorporation of digital tools not only can boost student motivation and contribute to their better involvement but also can change classroom dynamics encouraging student-centered learning for them to take more control over their learning.

**Main part.** In order to make the learning process more meaningful experience with the help of digital tools some issues should be taken on board. Universal Design for Learning emphasizes three principles for designing instruction that can be really beneficial in technology-integrated learning: Providing multiple means of engagement, action, expression, and representation which guides teachers in reducing learning barriers for students. [1] This approach organizes teaching into three components called networks that should be of prime importance for educators conducting technology-driven classes and raising students' awareness on fulfilling the tasks. The Why of learning is the most effective dimension triggering interest and motivation, developing self-regulation and reflection to create purposeful and motivated learners. The What dimension includes background knowledge, visuals, information processing, and contextual understanding to create learners who are resourceful and knowledgeable. The How of learning includes goal-setting, planning, strategies to create strategic and goal-oriented learners. Generally, in the online environment, teacher-student interactions are completely different and many of the informal discussions and opportunities for sharing are rarely there that can make learning a daunting experience. Thus, It can be isolating for students, especially for those who need extra support and care. So, incorporating these principles in technology-driven classes must be of great help.

It is known that learning and teaching are closely interrelated to psychological aspects. Psychologists working in the field of education study and examine how people study in a variety of settings to identify approaches and strategies to make learning more effective. Creating a welcoming environment using restorative practices and encouraging student voices ensures that all students get what they need. When students feel safe in the learning environment, they are more capable of learning. So, we thought incorporating (SEL) social-emotional learning and its strategies into teaching with digital tools and empowering students with life skills, such as decision making, self-awareness, and self-regulation would be one of the solutions to the matter. [2] Social-Emotional learning is the process of developing and using the skill set we use to cope with feelings, set goals, make decisions, get along with others, and feel empathy. People with strong Social-Emotional skills are better equipped to manage daily challenges, build positive relationships. SEL helps people to thrive in life and can be taught from preschool to adulthood. (Srinivasan 2019) Maurice Elias, a psychology professor at Rutgers University and director of the university's Social-

Emotional learning Lab describes SEL as a process through which we learn to recognize and manage emotions, care about stress, behave ethically and responsibly, develop a positive relationship and avoid negative behaviour. It will help not only personal development but their academic performance as well. All this creates a culture in which students and teachers respect one another and enjoy being together. Further strengthening relationships and motivating both students and teachers to do their best. SEL is widely used in teaching and would be great to incorporate into teaching and learning.[4] Educators need not carve out class time to explicitly teach empathy or collaboration; instead, opportunities should exist for students to practice those competencies in authentic and meaningful ways.

Some of the productive SEL practices include:

1. Improving relationships with and among students: A focus on relationships helps teachers when grouping students for collaborative assignments
2. Facilitating critical conversations: Encourage students to share respectfully using restorative questions. This proactively builds the students' social and emotional capacity.
3. Creating a supportive classroom climate: Creating a supportive climate allows students to be actively engaged in classroom activities.
4. Enhancing students' self-awareness: Self-awareness is a foundational principle of an equitable learning space. Periodic use of self-reflection tools can help students and teachers be aware of beliefs and assumptions so that genuine relationships can be fostered in an inclusive and supportive space. As students and teachers share their own beliefs and experiences, they build trust with one another and are more ready for learning.

As technology is increasingly used in the educational process, it is becoming a more powerful tool in putting multiple intelligences to use. The purposeful and thoughtful association of technology and Gardner's multiple intelligences theory can benefit both students and teachers throughout the learning process. The theory of multiple intelligences was developed in 1983 by Dr. Howard Gardner, professor of education at Harvard University. It suggests that the traditional notion of intelligence, based on I.Q. testing is far too limited. Instead, Dr. Gardner proposes eight different intelligences to account for a broader range of human potential in children and adults. [3] When Gardner published his *Multiple Intelligence Theory*, many were in disagreement. Before the 1980s, the educational field believed that

intelligence was already determined at birth. Researchers used short-answer tests to assess one's intelligence, and it was unheard of to assume that one's cognitive capacity could grow. The *Multiple Intelligences Theory* states that it is to the benefit of both the student and the instructor if the student's intelligence can be identified. Identifying a student's intelligence allows the instructor to select appropriate activities for the student in the classroom and guide their learning journey more effectively. The eight intelligences are listed below:

**1. Bodily-Kinesthetic Intelligence.** The ability to manipulate both the body and objects with a keen sense of timing is known as bodily-kinesthetic intelligence.

**2. Interpersonal Intelligence.** While the ability to communicate effectively with others is common knowledge based on interpersonal intelligence, it is not merely limited to verbal interactions. People with developed interpersonal intelligence are also able to read the moods of others.

**3. Intrapersonal Intelligence.** The ability to understand one's own thoughts is known as intrapersonal intelligence. Individuals who demonstrate intrapersonal intelligence are acutely aware of their feelings and can show an appreciation for themselves and other humans.

**4. Verbal-Linguistic Intelligence.** The ability to express oneself using words and language is known as verbal-linguistic intelligence. This intelligence is unique because it is the most commonly shared human ability. It allows us to apply meaning to words and express appreciation for complex phrases.

**5. Musical Intelligence.** The ability to acutely reflect on sounds is demonstrated by those who possess musical intelligence. These people can distinguish between specific pitches, tones, and rhythms that others may miss.

**6. Logical-Mathematical Intelligence.** Sometimes misconstrued as simply the ability to calculate mathematical equations, logical-mathematical intelligence is much more than that. Individuals with this developed intelligence demonstrate excellent reasoning skills, abstract thought, and the ability to infer based on patterns.

**7. Naturalist Intelligence.** A sensitivity to features in the natural world is most closely tied to what is called naturalist intelligence.

**8. Spatial Intelligence.** Visually artistic people are known to demonstrate spatial intelligence. These abilities include manipulating images, graphic skills, and spatial reasoning – anything that would include more than two dimensions.

It should be one of the priorities of a teacher to take on board students' interests, goals, motivation, and abilities to tailor the classes for their needs and plan the lessons accordingly.

**Conclusions.** Applying digital tools to meet various learner goals in the teaching process contributes to promoting student engagement and their quality participation during classes.

Universal Design for learning is a research-based framework that helps teachers plan the lessons to meet the diverse and variable needs of all students.

Incorporating SEL into technology-enhanced teaching is crucial since it provides opportunities for students to acquire life skills. The benefits of social and emotional learning (SEL) are well-researched, with evidence demonstrating that an education that promotes SEL yields positive results for students, adults, and different communities.

While additional research is still needed to determine the best measures for assessing and supporting a range of intelligence, the theory has provided opportunities to broaden definitions of intelligence. As an educator, it is useful to think about the different ways that information can be presented. However, it is critical not to classify students as being specific types of learners nor as having an innate or fixed type of intelligence.

Having an understanding of different teaching approaches from which we all can learn, as well as a toolbox with a variety of ways to present content to students, is valuable for increasing the accessibility of technology-enhanced learning experiences for all students.

Providing students with multiple ways to demonstrate knowledge and skills increases engagement and learning and provides teachers with a more accurate understanding of students' knowledge and skills.

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