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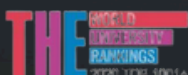
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# BULETIN APB

DIGITAL LEARNING

AKADEMI PENGAJIAN BAHASA  
UNIVERSITI TEKNOLOGI MARA  
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# *Paving Malaysian Education for Digitalisation: What Do We Miss?*

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The world revolution has shown a rapid movement towards digitalisation. The process has expanded the use of digital technologies, not only by transforming business operations but also by increasing productivity and shaping new values across various domains. These changes impact not only industries but also educational institutions, paving the way for the application of digital technologies. To cater to the needs of industry, higher education has begun to integrate digital technologies into teaching and learning. Digital learning is becoming an integral part of the education process currently, yet there are inherent challenges faced by the parties involved that need to

be considered. This is due to supporting Malaysia's opening gambit in providing, enhancing, and reshaping skills for the labour force in the digital landscape (Sharon, October 17, 2024). Therefore, it is crucial to review the loopholes in the process of digitalising the Malaysian education system for teaching and learning.

Greater attention should be paid to the cost involved in making digital education a full run. Dr. Shanina Sharatol Ahmad Shah from the Faculty of Education at Universiti Malaya states that Malaysia needs to allocate a significant amount of funds to prepare classrooms with digital equipment (Rajaendram, 2024). The cost will cover the expenses needed to develop the amenities, as well as to install and upgrade the internet connectivity and devices required for teaching and learning. Malaysian higher institutions are observed to deal with the lack of digital facilities, as are schools, regardless of whether they are in urban or rural areas nationwide. Moreover, training for the educators and technical staff is equally essential to the allocation of the budget. If digital learning is to be fully enforced, the Ministry of Malaysian Education must be ready to prioritise the educational sector's financial stability and funds so that the quality of education can be secured.

Moreover, the adequacy of skills and readiness among educators is another lacking contributing element in the success of cultivating digital teaching and learning in Malaysian education. Nor et al. (2019) have long stressed the importance of having educators ready to teach learners in a digital environment. The educators' readiness in teaching in classrooms equipped with digital technology facilities is the starting point to navigate students' performance and positive learning experience. However, research conducted by Khatirveloo (2024) has identified that some educators resist the implementation of digital classrooms, particularly blended learning. The faculty's insufficient incentives and limited access to facilities contribute to this resistance. This situation raises the question of the effectiveness and quality of online lessons for a long-term impact if educators are made compulsory without any personal interest. This suggests that integrating digital technologies into academics and ensuring that educators fully accept and apply them is not an overnight process; however, with clear instructions and a proper plan, it can be achieved in the near future. Thus, providing related training and learning opportunities, along with sufficient incentives for educators, will open the space to narrow the gaps in the education system.





Another concern regarding the endorsement of digitalisation in teaching practices in Malaysia is the decline of focus and health among both educators and students. To cater to the vast demand of the educational system, particularly due to the COVID-19 pandemic, educators and learners are experiencing dramatic changes. When educators are forced to alter the lessons abruptly, learners push themselves to adapt, yet their efforts may result in despair as individuals handle the situations differently (Chen et al., 2023). Jaafar et al. (2023) highlighted that one of the challenges in applying e-learning faced by students, especially during the COVID-19 pandemic, is maintaining attention due to the unstimulating approaches employed. Besides, not to mention instructors, learners also experience numerous health issues like neck pain, fatigue, and headaches (Chen et al., 2023). This is due to excessive exposure to digital devices when dealing with online classes and related tasks. What makes this situation worse is when the technology takes a toll on time, as individuals are no longer able to put a fine line between professional and personal life, leading to severe stress (Buda & Kovacs, 2024). While Mohd Bahar et al. (2024) addressed the importance of maintaining digital well-being, which covers the mental and bodily state among learners, Buda and Kovacs (2024) stressed the importance of educators enhancing competency in encompassing digital learning in the lessons to lessen their technological well-being issues and minimise the time of screening. This scenario highlights the importance of seeking medical attention and aids for both educators and learners who require them.

In conclusion, the main overlooked factors in establishing digital education in Malaysia are health, digital competency and readiness, as well as cost. These issues are in serious need of attention and prompt action from the higher education ministry and administrators of higher institutions. The failure to cater for needs and resolve problems jeopardises not only the individuals involved but also the quality of the future of the Malaysian educational system.

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