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Learning through Digital Technology: Role of National and International Education Teachers

Ali Ahmad Al-Barakat[1]*, Rommel AlAli[2]*, Samih Mahmoud Al Karasneh[3], Bushra Ahmad Alakashee[3], Sami Sulieman Al-Qatawneh[3], Abdalla Falah El-Mneizel[3], Najah Rajeh Al Salhi[3], Mohammed Alhawamdeh[4]

[1] *Department of Education- University of Sharjah, United Arab Emirates.*
Email: aalbarakat@sharjah.ac.ae

[2] *The National Research Center for Giftedness and Creativity, King Faisal University , Saudi Arabia.*
Email: ralali@kfu.edu.sa

[3] *University of Sharjah, United Arab Emirates.*

[4] *Mohamed Bin Zayed University for Humanities, United Arab Emirates*

***** *Corresponding Authors Ali Ahmad Al-Barakat Email: aalbarakat@sharjah.ac.ae; Rommel AlAli Email: ralali@kfu.edu.sa*

ABSTRACT

Digital learning tools have become increasingly popular worldwide as they enhance the teaching and learning process. It has the potential to improve the educational experience and awareness of children both within the host country and internationally. Additionally, it can contribute to personal growth, promote fair competition, increase productivity, and foster a lifelong love of learning. The main aim of this study was to examine how digital education can enhance the learning of young children from both the host country and international backgrounds. The study sample consisted of 53 female childhood education teachers, including 23 national and 30 international teachers from the Emirate of Sharjah in the United Arab Emirates. The participants were selected using the available sampling method. To achieve the study's goal, a carefully crafted, semi

structured interview was created, considering its validity and reliability. The study revealed numerous consequences linked to learning through digital tools, which enhance the quality of education for both local and international children in the host country. The results highlighted the importance of cognitive learning through digital platforms as well as the development of emotional aspects. The results of this study showed that students achieved a wide range of learning outcomes in areas such as language, mathematics, science, and social skills. In addition, the findings provide significant evidence of the impact of digital learning tools on enhancing the motivation of host country nationals and international students to learn and improving their perception of independent reading. Moreover, positive attitudes toward learning environments emerged as a side effect. In conclusion, the study presents a set of relevant recommendations.

Keywords: Digital Technology, National and International Young Children's Learning, Reflections, UAE.

INTRODUCTION AND THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

Digital learning is a modern educational method that incorporates digital tools and techniques to improve the learning process (Napal Fraile et al., 2018; Zakopoulos et al., 2023). It's vital to establish educational and learning practices that support the holistic development of children from a young age (Brown et al., 2015; Cobanoglu et al., 2019; Hanna et al., 2019; Hasanen et al., 2021; Mengstie, 2023). Teachers, especially female teachers, must adopt developmentally appropriate practices, underpinned by a thorough understanding of their principles and applications.

On a global scale, there is an emerging trend of reform movements aimed at enhancing childhood learning environments. These movements are setting standards for digital learning experiences within a child-centered framework (Cho & Kim, 2021; Otto et al., 2023), focusing on children's learning practices and the role of teachers in delivering digital technology-based learning experiences that promote overall development (Cade et al., 2022; Fowler, 2017; Hatch, 2010; Raines & Johnston, 2003; Zakopoulos et al., 2023).

A wide range of digital learning tools are available on different platforms that cater to the needs of learners in various areas, including reading, writing, communication, and mathematics. A wide variety of digital applications and tools are accessible to enhance these learning experiences (Rahiem, 2021; Ratheeswari, 2018). One type of digital learning tool consists of applications and programs specifically created for the purpose of publishing and sharing lessons. Slide Share, Outlook, and WordPress are tools that have been mentioned in previous research (Havasi et al., 2009; Napal Fraile et al., 2018). These applications offer users an open and accessible platform for publishing and distributing educational content.

There is another category that includes applications and programmes designed for remote communication. Examples of tools that facilitate remote communication and collaboration include social networks, Zoom, and Microsoft Teams. These applications are open and accessible to facilitate communication among users (AlAli & Al-Barakat, 2022; Rahiem, 2021; Ratheeswari, 2018).

Digital learning aids have received endorsement from multiple theories, including the constructivist theory, which asserts that learning is an interactive process in which learners create knowledge when presented with challenges or tasks (AlAli & Al-Barakat, 2022). This idea is consistent with the utilization of digital learning tools that offer activity tasks at varying levels of difficulty, hence pushing learners to perform increasingly complicated learning activities (Al-Tabakh & Ismail, 2019). Behavioral theory strongly supports the use of digital learning aids (Songkram et al., 2023). According to this theory, learning takes place by aiding and reinforcing behaviors that closely resemble the desired results. Every piece of cognitive content supplied to learners must fulfill criteria that elicit interest, motivation, and incentives. Strengthening learners' responses to learning activities expedites the learning process (Cao et al., 2023; Datnow, 2020).

Digital learning tools provide a wide variety of audiovisual and cognitive stimuli that actively involve learners and enhance the enjoyment of the learning process (Eksail & Afari, 2020; Hatzigianni et al., 2023; McFadden & Thomas, 2016). Individuals might engage in repetitive activities to alter their behavior and attain specific objectives (Al-Qahtani, 2019; Hatzigianni et al., 2023; McFadden & Thomas, 2016). Moreover, cognitive theory provides clear evidence for the use of digital learning aids. The primary focus is on the internal cognitive processes of learners, including attention, perception, interpretation, processing, and decision-making. This paradigm prioritizes the gradual presentation of knowledge, beginning with basic concepts and advancing toward more intricate ones. As a result, it is compatible with the procedures associated with utilizing digital learning resources (Abbas, 2019; Hatzigianni et al., 2023).

The criteria for creating educational experiences should include the use of a wide range of digital learning materials to enhance the effectiveness of learning. The purpose of these standards is to offer children a variety of educational opportunities that cover intellectual, social, emotional, and skill growth, among other areas. Especially amid the COVID-19 pandemic, there has been a significant focus on utilizing touch-based digital learning tools as the main source of learning. These tools are designed to match the psychological tendencies of children and play a crucial role in helping them build knowledge, acquire skills, and establish values that coincide with their psychological, cognitive, and social traits (Yadav & Chakraborty, 2022).

Yadav and Chakraborty (2022) suggest that digital technology can improve children's language, mathematical, and scientific learning and promote more social interactions. Consequently, this enhances the growth of language and cognitive experiences by engaging in tactile interactions with digital learning

tools. displays. According to Bozzola et al. (2018), Park and Park (2021), and Yang et al. (2022), educators assert that digital learning tools can capture children's attention. This is especially significant because young children naturally have cognitive characteristics that make them inclined to interact with such tools and devices (Wojcik et al., 2022).

Multiple studies have emphasized the need to integrate digital learning tools into the educational process because of the influence of these tools on many aspects of education. These techniques have been shown to impact cognitive achievement, optimize learning efficiency, cultivate problem-solving abilities, enhance learning results, elevate skill performance, heighten motivation for learning and achievement, and alleviate cognitive strain (Bicen & Kocakoyun, 2018; Hassan, 2017; Khalifa & Al-Sebahi, 2021; Su & Cheng, 2015). The implementation of digital learning tools is guided by fundamental components that establish a structure for their development. The components consist of mechanics, dynamics, and emotions. Mechanics comprise elements such as points, levels, leaderboards, badges, and missions. Dynamics refer to the various elements that make up the learning situation, including active engagement, competitiveness, challenges, successes, rewards, and other interactive components. Emotions have a significant impact on digital learning tools, eliciting imagination, generosity, discovery, and several other emotional reactions (Kelly, 2012; Murcia et al., 2018; Romero-Tena et al., 2020; Sinclair, 2018; Songkram et al., 2023; Sosa Díaz, 2021).

Multiple research studies have been carried out to investigate the incorporation of digital learning technologies in online learning settings, specifically aiming to improve students' self-confidence and academic performance. These studies emphasize the importance of granting students the opportunity to utilize digital educational materials outside of the conventional classroom environment (Stratigos & Fenech, 2021; Thorpe et al., 2015; Willis & Exley, 2018; Wright & Bales, 2014). Access to technology can provide excellent educational possibilities by facilitating the implementation of effective strategies for students to use technology and facilitating continuous efforts to improve educational experiences for all students (KewalRamani et al., 2018; Ramaila & Mpinga, 2022; Sailer et al., 2021). Moreover, the data suggest that utilizing digital resources for learning has significant impacts on students' self-confidence, motivation, anxiety levels, and overall academic accomplishments (Chen & Tu, 2021; Lin et al., 2017; Ozerbas & Erdogan, 2016).

The impact of digital learning tools on children's learning, regardless of their nationality, has been examined in previous studies (Gözüm & Kandır, 2021; Griffith & Arnold, 2019; Papadakis et al., 2022). These studies suggest that teachers play a crucial role in promoting constructive and critical discussions after children use digital learning tool applications. These talks are crucial for children to enhance their social experiences by expressing their interactions with excitement, motivation, pleasure, and active engagement when using touchscreens on digital learning tools.

The impact of using digital learning tools to improve the quality of education for children from both the host country and international backgrounds depends on the specific tasks they are involved in. Consistent with worldwide patterns in childhood education, there is a significant focus on choosing learning activities and tasks that correspond to children's capabilities (Wiley et al., 2016; Zakopoulos et al., 2023). This feature is essential for promoting the growth of social interaction skills in children from both the host country and international backgrounds, as well as nurturing their abilities in creative and imaginative thinking (Wiley et al., 2016; Yadav & Chakraborty, 2022).

Educators, as emphasized by Wiley et al. (2016) and Yadav and Chakraborty (2022), underscore the need for incorporating digital learning tools to facilitate reflective learning. They promote the utilization of programmes that stimulate children's creative, social, and emotional growth, such as video chat applications that cultivate interpersonal skills with others. Furthermore, to foster cognitive growth, it is imperative for children to participate in endeavours that augment inventive cognition, logical deduction, and visionary ideation. Wiley et al. (2016) emphasize the significance of cognitive experiences that promote the growth of advanced thinking abilities, such as analysis, synthesis, and assessment, by utilizing drawing and storytelling applications. These experiences significantly enhance children's vocabulary learning, comprehension of new verbal structures, and comprehension of scientific and mathematical concepts.

The results of other earlier investigations (Bergman, 2021; Blake, 2016; Bolhuis, 2003; Bracken, 2015) further support these considerations. These studies show that using digital learning tools in children's learning activities encourages them to participate in higher-level cognitive processes through social engagement. This approach helps children to properly understand and incorporate knowledge into their cognitive frameworks. Furthermore, the research conducted by Nikolayev et al. (2023) suggested that interactive touch screen applications, when combined with linguistic support, have a positive impact on the development of theory of mind (ToM) interactions in young people. By engaging in games that include integrated voice-overs, children's cognitive frameworks are enhanced. Significantly, the process of acquiring and expanding language skills is enhanced when young people actively and collaboratively participate in digital games while also engaging in meaningful conversations with adults.

Previous studies have emphasized the importance of promoting and nurturing children's learning experiences by engaging them in classroom discussions focused on linguistic, scientific, or mathematical concepts that emerge from their inquiry and explorations using digital learning tools. These discussions are crucial in fostering children's growth in terms of their cognitive, social, and skillful learning capacities (Azevedo et al., 2010; Blake, 2016; Bolhuis, 2003; Bracken, 2015; Burris, 2019; Istifci & Goksel, 2022).

Several empirical investigations (Bradford & Hamer, 2022; Pattermann et al., 2022; Ulfayantik et al., 2022) have provided evidence for the pivotal role of early childhood educators in effectively implementing and utilizing digital

learning applications as pedagogical tools that enhance the acquisition of children's practical skills. By participating in activities that involve science process skills, students improve their capacities for seeing, describing, and communicating through different media. Additionally, they acquire proficiency in the methods of induction and deduction, specifically within the framework of creating forecasts. These findings emphasize the beneficial influence of digital learning aids in helping young learners acquire and use crucial cognitive abilities.

Prior studies (Al-Baghdadi, 2014; Hamdi, 2008; Khalida, 2007) have shown the importance of digital activities in enhancing children's learning experiences, namely, using investigative applications and scientific research. These exercises enable children to gain knowledge autonomously, fostering critical thinking and self-sufficiency in the learning process.

This study seeks to fill this void by examining the consequences of digital technology in a manner that is both safe and secure under the guidance and supervision of teachers and parents. This research is significant because it is one of the first studies undertaken in the Emirati context. This study aimed to investigate the impact of adopting digital learning aids in educational settings. The study highlights the significance of supervised and guided use of digital technology applications, as the observed consequences are directly tied to the effectiveness of their optimal utilization. Hence, the results of this research are anticipated to enhance children's stimulation, drive, and involvement in the process of acquiring knowledge, both within and beyond educational settings during their early years.

It is crucial to acknowledge that the use of digital learning tools by children, both in the host country and internationally, is not an isolated phenomenon. Instead, it takes place within the broader framework of their learning environments. The aim of this study is to investigate the impact of utilizing digital learning tools for learning reflections on improving the educational outcomes of both local and international children in the host country.

THE STUDY PROBLEM

Digital learning applications have become increasingly popular in childhood education in both national and international schools in the United Arab Emirates. The effectiveness of these applications depends on the strategies utilized by childhood education teachers from host countries and international backgrounds to enhance children's learning experiences. Repeated daily observations have highlighted the increasing focus on the educational potential of digital learning applications in the United Arab Emirates. These applications play a significant role in shaping and enhancing children's experiences. Due to a lack of clear guidance from families, the surrounding environment, and schools, children frequently encounter digital learning tools, either by choice or by circumstance. Given the current circumstances, it is crucial to examine how learning reflections

through the use of digital learning tools can improve the quality of children's education. To address the research objective, we propose the following primary question: What are the observable effects of learning reflections on children's learning when digital learning tools are used in different countries?

METHOD

The study employed a qualitative research analysis methodology, as it aimed to delve into and comprehend intricate phenomena in a thorough manner. The researchers employed the semistructured interview approach to gather dependable data to address a range of research problems. The chosen approach was selected for its capacity to offer a qualitative understanding of the subject matter and collect comprehensive information. This approach enables flexibility in conducting interviews while upholding a certain level of structure.

Study population and sample

The study population consisted of female childhood education teachers who taught in government schools affiliated with the Sharjah Education Authority in the Emirate of Sharjah during the first semester of the 2022–2023 academic year. This includes both host country nationals and international teachers. A sample of 53 female teachers was selected from the population; these teachers consisted of 23 host country nationals and 30 international teachers from different countries such as UK, India, Egypt, Pakistan, Philippine. The sampling method used was based on availability. Participants were chosen based on their willingness and cooperation to take part in the study.

Study instrument (semi structured interview)

To accomplish the study's goal of examining the impact of digital learning tools on children's learning, a semi structured interview guide (Schedule manual) was created. This guide consisted of four questions. Personal interviews play a vital role in collecting data and gaining a deeper understanding of the phenomenon being studied. They are important methodological tools for qualitative analysis. By conducting personal interviews, researchers can obtain valuable insights, diagnose research phenomena, and suggest potential solutions. In qualitative research, scholars such as Burton (2000) and Cohen et al. (2002) highlight the importance of using semistructured interviews to gather dependable evidence that aids in decision-making for different research issues. This method facilitates the acquisition of a qualitative understanding of the subject matter and offers valuable insights into the research topic.

The interview guide used in this study was developed based on the researchers' extensive experience in university teaching. The guide underwent

thorough scrutiny by a committee of experts in the field to ensure its validity. Seeking expert opinions and providing feedback to individuals were integral parts of the process of improving the quality and appropriateness of the interview questions. In addition, the reliability of the interview guide was established by following qualitative research procedures as described in the educational literature. Several reputable sources were consulted to inform the rigorous approach employed in the design and validation of the interview guide. These sources include Bell and Waters (2018), Burton (2000), Cohen et al. (2002), Glaser and Strauss (2017), and Oliver (2000). These sources offer valuable insights and guidance in the field of qualitative research, ensuring the strength and dependability of the interview questions.

Data collection and analysis procedures

The data collection process in this study adhered to well-established qualitative research procedures as described in the relevant theoretical literature (Clarke & Braun, 2013; Creswell & Poth, 2016; Patton, 2014). The procedures implemented aimed to safeguard participants' identities, provide clarity on the study's purpose, underscore the importance of their responses, and guarantee the utmost confidentiality of the data provided. Before starting the interview, we tried to build a connection with the participants by creating a friendly and respectful atmosphere. A range of question formats were used during the interviews to obtain a wide range of consistent responses from the study participants. The study utilized the grounded theory approach, a commonly used method in qualitative research, for data analysis. This method required a thorough analysis and careful evaluation of the participants' answers using a deductive and thoughtful approach. The data were coded and categorized into main dimensions (main categories) and subdimensions (subcategories) during the process. Subsequently, the frequencies and percentages for each primary dimension were computed using these categories to facilitate subsequent analysis.

STUDY FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

This study investigates the impact of digital learning tools on the education of children from host and international backgrounds. Key findings include:
1. Enhanced Cognitive Skills: Digital tools boost critical thinking, problem-solving, and information processing abilities.
2. Increased Reading Participation: Access to digital libraries and e-books promotes reading and literacy.
3. Boosted Learning Motivation: Interactive educational apps enhance children's engagement and enjoyment in learning.
4. Positive Attitudes towards Learning: Digital tools foster a favorable outlook on education, cultivating curiosity and knowledge enthusiasm.
These outcomes underscore the value of digital learning in improving children's

educational experiences. Further analysis will provide deeper insights into each aspect.

First: Enhancing Cognitive Learning in Children

The data collected revealed that out of the 49 individuals interviewed, 92.45% of the participants recognized the positive influence of digital technology on children's cognitive abilities. Participants emphasized the improved understanding of language, social dynamics, math, and science among both local and international children. Many individuals shared their perspectives on this issue, as evident in their statements:

Yes, the utilization of digital learning tools for learning has proven to be instrumental in assisting my children in comprehending scientific concepts. like melting, evaporation, and condensation... Without the use of digital learning tools for learning, it would have been challenging for me to effectively teach these concepts to my children."

"The children in the class, regardless of their nationality [lesson], not only grasped the concept of the national flag and its colors but also gained a deeper understanding of heritage concepts. They learned about loyalty and national identity, as well as developed an appreciation for the value and love of their homeland."

"My children have acquired a range of concepts that promote volunteerism and its principles. In our beloved country, we strive to instil the value of volunteering from an early age... through engaging activities and educational videos...they comprehended the concept of volunteering. Our school actively encourages such initiatives..., and we receive ongoing support and encouragement from our director to incorporate digital technology in our learning environments."

"My children, regardless of nationality, have acquired a clear understanding of linguistic concepts such as plural and singular forms. They have learned the significance of distinguishing between plurals and singulars, enabling them to grasp the difference between them."

"The iPad has proven to be an excellent tool for my children's learning regardless of nationality, particularly in regard to grasping concepts like skip counting, counting in tens, and counting up and down... Through e-learning resources, my children were able to fully comprehend and master these fundamental mathematical concepts."

The findings mentioned above highlight the importance of digital technology in improving the cognitive development of children. The findings suggest that children have developed a wide range of mathematical, social, national, linguistic, and scientific concepts. These results can be credited to the training programmes that early childhood education teachers have completed. These programmes have equipped them with the skills to effectively incorporate digital technology into both virtual and in-person learning settings. It is crucial to note that the COVID-19 pandemic's onset was the main factor driving the growing

use of digital learning tools in education. Over time, children and teachers from both the host country and international backgrounds have grown more accustomed to these devices, resulting in their incorporation as vital educational tools.

The findings of this study support the global emphasis on using digital technology applications to enhance children's cognitive learning. These emerging trends support the utilization of video chat applications, such as Video Dialoging Apps, to enhance the cultivation of social interaction abilities in children. In fostering cognitive development, cognitive experience programmes that promote the practice of thinking skills have been recognized as valuable tools (Wiley et al., 2016; Yadav & Chakraborty, 2022). These global studies provide additional evidence that the integration of digital technology applications can enhance cognitive learning in children. Several educational studies have highlighted the significance of using digital technology applications to promote the growth of scientific, social, and linguistic concepts (Bergman, 2021; Chen & Tu, 2021; Nikolayev et al., 2023) (Wiley et al., 2016). These studies emphasize the importance of involving children in activities that promote the development of critical thinking skills, such as using drawing and storytelling applications. Through active engagement in these activities, children can improve their vocabulary skills, learn new language patterns, and develop a stronger grasp of scientific and mathematical ideas.

Second: Participation in free reading activities

The analysis of the interview data revealed noteworthy findings on the influence of digital technology on children's curiosity and their preference for participating in unrestricted reading activities through global websites. Among the study participants, 40 respondents (75.47% of the total) acknowledged the significant impact of digital technology in enhancing children's learning experiences through free reading. Some respondents specifically expressed the following:

"In our kindergarten, we place a strong emphasis on promoting and encouraging host country national and international *children to engage in free reading activities.... Yes, free reading.... We use it greatly... Our goal is to develop children's reading tendencies and interests."*

The results of this study provide insight into the prevailing pattern in the United Arab Emirates of educating both local and international children to develop a passion for reading by encouraging them to engage in enjoyable and unrestricted reading. Many childhood education teachers in the study sample noted that the influence of digital technology was a major factor in this trend. As a result, numerous schools in the Emirate of Sharjah have been actively participating in the annual International Book Fair. Several participants emphasized the importance of promoting free reading among both local and international children in the host country:

"We, as schools in the Emirate of Sharjah, eagerly participate in the international annual book fair alongside our students... The book fair holds great anticipation for us... as it fulfills the diverse technological cultural needs of our children regardless of their nationality. We eagerly await this event, as it provides a valuable platform for enhancing their exposure to various forms of technical knowledge."

This trend, which is common among many childhood education teachers, is crucial for motivating children to learn. It is a key aspect of digital technology-based learning. Previous studies (Kaya, 2020; Kostyrka-Allchorne et al., 2017; Nikolayev et al., 2023; Rizk & Hillier, 2021) provide evidence that digital technology applications, specifically those with interactive touch screens and language support, have a significant impact on improving reading skills.

This study confirmed that the use of game applications with sound effects is important for enhancing language skills and promoting cognitive development in children. The study emphasizes that children in their host country and from around the world show a growing interest in reading when they interact with digital games in a positive and interactive way. This is especially true when they have meaningful discussions with adults. The analysis of the data for the third dimension confirms that the use of digital technology applications promotes learning through digital learning tools. It effectively motivates children from both host countries and international backgrounds to engage in learning.

Third: Arousing Children's Motivation to Learn

The data analysis revealed that all participants in the study sample acknowledged the substantial influence of digital learning tools on enhancing the motivation of host country nationals and international children to engage in digital learning activities. Several noteworthy quotes from the study sample participants' responses are as follows:

"Indeed, learning through technological devices has emerged as a powerful source of motivation for host country national and international children... Activities conducted via technology have gained a greater prominence compared to conventional methods...

Technology-based learning has become a driving force in motivating children to learn... Within our educational district and within our group [our WhatsApp group], providing digital activities has become a key means of stimulating children's intrinsic motivation to learn with eagerness and enthusiasm."

The results of this dimension emphasize the major effect of digital learning tools on the education of children from host countries and abroad. This outcome can be credited to the current trend in the United Arab Emirates of incorporating digital culture as a valuable educational tool. This result has significant implications for children's learning both in the host country and

internationally. It encourages their active involvement with digital technology, enhancing their effectiveness and creativity in using it to acquire knowledge and apply it in real-life situations. As a result, it enables children from both the host country and abroad to develop a sense of ownership over their education and tackle challenges with a resolute mindset. As a result, digital technology has become a modern learning tool that improves students' academic performance and encourages their motivation to learn.

This finding is consistent with previous research that has emphasized the importance of digital technology in motivating children and promoting their engagement in higher cognitive processes through social interaction (Bergman, 2021; Chen & Tu, 2021; Hamdi, 2008; OHCHR, 2021; Sheehan et al., 2019; Sonnenschein et al., 2021; Toran et al., 2021). Moreover, these studies have highlighted the significant role of these interactions in facilitating children's understanding and integration of knowledge into their cognitive frameworks.

Fourth: Developing Positive Attitudes toward Learning Environments

The data analysis revealed that 84.90% of the study sample recognized the significance of children's affection and enthusiasm for learning through digital technology in fostering positive attitudes toward the learning process. These statements, taken from the responses of the study participants, illustrate this idea:

"Host country national and international children display a genuine fondness for learning through the iPad... They particularly enjoy exploring stories on websites, and they have even learned how to preserve flowers through these digital platforms..."

"Thanks to the flipped classroom approach, the reading lessons have encouraged them to actively engage with one another..."

"Yes, Teacher [the teacher addresses the interviewer], the children [want] all the classes [lessons] to be through the iPad, because they find it to be an effective learning tool..."

When electronic activities are incorporated, host country national and international children express a desire to spend more time in school."

iPad-based lessons keep children engaged and prevent them from getting bored."

The data analysis results confirmed the high occurrence of positive attitudes among children toward learning through digital learning tools. The study participants' responses were highly encouraging, especially given the expressed desire of the children for all their learning activities to be conducted using digital technology. The feedback from the interview sample reinforced the notion that children derive pleasure from their learning experiences and do not encounter any feelings of tedium when participating in lessons delivered via digital technology. The results from this aspect support the idea that incorporating digital learning tools in learning environments can lead to significant benefits and advantages.

According to these findings, it can be inferred that children's positive attitudes indicate their tendency to use digital technology for learning purposes. Positive attitudes are essential for guiding, regulating, and shaping behavior during the learning process and can also be used to predict future conduct. These findings are consistent with the results of prior research (Durak & Kaygin, 2020; Hwang et al., 2017; Konok et al., 2020; Livingstone et al., 2017; Warren & Aloia, 2019) that emphasized the importance of attitudes and their influence on the quality of children's learning experiences.

Conclusions, RECOMMENDATIONS, AND LIMITATIONS

The primary objective of this study was to investigate the impact of digital learning tools on improving the educational experience of both local and international children in the host country. An analysis was conducted on the responses obtained from semi structured interviews, which consisted of four questions, to achieve this objective. After carefully examining the data collected from the interviews, the researchers discovered several noteworthy findings. First, research has shown that the utilization of digital learning tools can significantly improve children's cognitive learning abilities, regardless of their nationality. The tools offered interactive and captivating learning experiences that promoted improved understanding, knowledge retention, and critical thinking abilities among the children. Second, the interviews revealed that digital learning tools were instrumental in fostering free reading activities among children of all nationalities. The tools offered access to a diverse selection of digital books, promoting a passion for reading and motivating children to delve into various genres and subjects.

In addition, the use of digital learning tools was shown to enhance children's motivation to acquire knowledge. The interactive features and gamification aspects of these tools, including rewards and progress tracking, encouraged children to actively engage in their learning and remain motivated throughout their educational experience. Finally, the researchers found that digital learning tools played a role in fostering positive attitudes toward learning environments. The use of these tools fostered a favorable learning environment for children, resulting in heightened interest, inquisitiveness, and pleasure in the educational journey.

According to the study's findings, there are several suggestions for improving children's learning experiences with digital learning tools. An effective suggestion is to offer training courses that emphasize the use of digital learning tools as a valuable educational resource. These courses should focus on the child-centered learning approach, providing educators with the skills needed to seamlessly incorporate digital tools into their teaching methods. One suggestion is to encourage a culture of learning with digital technology by highlighting the numerous advantages and consequences of using digital learning tools in

educational settings for children. One way to accomplish this is by conducting awareness campaigns, workshops, and educational initiatives that emphasize the positive effects of digital tools on overall child development.

It is advisable to provide parents with informative leaflets or resources to assist them in effectively utilizing digital learning tools as an educational resource for their children. These resources provide guidance on the usage, benefits, and safety considerations of digital tools, enabling parents to actively engage in their children's learning journeys. In addition, additional educational research should be conducted to investigate the practices of childhood education teachers in the Emirate of Sharjah. This study will specifically investigate how educators can optimize children's learning experiences by incorporating digital technology. By understanding effective strategies, challenges, and best practices, it is possible to develop evidence-based guidelines and policies to support the implementation of digital learning in early childhood education.

There are several limitations to consider when interpreting the findings of this study. First, the research focused on a particular group of female childhood education teachers who worked in schools in the Emirate of Sharjah and were affiliated with the Sharjah Education Council during the 2022–2023 academic year. In addition, this study focused on investigating how digital technology applications impact children's learning experiences. The research was carried out by conducting semistructured interviews with a specific group of female childhood education teachers in the Emirate of Sharjah during the first semester of the 2022–2023 academic year. As a result, the data collection and analysis process were restricted to using semistructured interviews as qualitative research tools. In addition, the analysis of interview data was conducted using a theoretical approach rooted in qualitative research analysis. No other analytical approaches or quantitative methods were used in this study.

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DECLARATION

Conflict of interest statement

The authors declare that the research was conducted in the absence of any commercial or financial relationships that could be construed as potential conflicts of interest.

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Author bios:

Ali Ahmad Al-Barakat, PhD, is a full professor in the Department of Education, College of Arts, Humanities, and Social Sciences, University of Sharjah, Sharjah, United Arab Emirates. His areas of expertise include childhood education, curriculum development, instructional design, and teacher education.

Rommel Mahmoud AlAli, PhD, Mesurement and Evaluation, is an associate professor in the National Research Center for Giftedness and Creativity, King Faisal University, in Hofuf, Saudi Arabia. His areas of expertise include construct and develop tests and scales, Measuring and evaluating educational performance, Analyzing and interacting with educational data, Developing innovative educational evaluation models.

Samih Mahmoud Al Karasneh, PhD, is a full professor in the Department of Education, College of Arts, Humanities, and Social Sciences, University of Sharjah, Sharjah, United Arab Emirates. His areas of expertise include teaching social studies from Kindergarten to Grade 12, civic education, digital citizenship learning and teaching, and learning environment design.

Bushra Ahmad Alakashee, PhD, is a full professor in the Department of Education, College of Arts, Humanities, and Social Sciences, University of Sharjah, Sharjah, United Arab Emirates. Her areas of expertise include educational psychology, learning theories, child's growth, personality traits, and psychological health and counseling.

Sami Sulieman Al-Qatawneh, PhD, is an associate professor in the Department of Education, College of Arts, Humanities, and Social Sciences, University of Sharjah, Sharjah, United Arab Emirates. His areas of expertise include teaching Arabic language, curriculum development, teacher education, curriculum evaluation, and learning design.

Abdalla Falah El-Mneizel, PhD, is a full professor in the Department of Education, College of Arts, Humanities, and Social Sciences, University of Sharjah, Sharjah, United Arab Emirates. His areas of expertise include assessment and evaluation, educational statistics, educational psychology,

educational research, and construction and standardization of psychological testing.

Najah Rajeh Al Salhi, PhD, is an assistant professor in Curricula and Methods of Teaching Science, Department of Education, College of Arts, Humanities, and Social Sciences, University of Sharjah, Sharjah, United Arab Emirates. His areas of expertise include science education, science curriculum development, teacher training, digital technology in education.

Mohammed Alhawamdeh, PhD, is a full professor in the Mohamed Bin Zayed University for Humanities, Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates. His areas of expertise include teaching Arabic language, curriculum development, human resource development, teacher education, and learning environments design.