


Chapter 5

Leveraging Technology for Inclusive Assessment: Enablers, Barriers, and Pedagogical Strategies in Diverse Learning Environments

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ABSTRACT

This chapter dives into how we can use technology to make assessments more inclusive, catering to the diverse needs of all learners. By reviewing various studies, it looks at what helps and what hinders the use of tech-driven assessments in different educational settings. The findings show that digital tools can significantly improve fairness, accessibility, and personalization in assessments. However, there are challenges like the digital divide, lack of proper teacher training, and resistance to change. The chapter also highlights the importance of teaching strategies like Universal Design for Learning (UDL) and adaptive learning systems to promote inclusivity. Practical suggestions include boosting digital literacy among teachers, ensuring everyone has access to the necessary infrastructure, and embedding inclusive principles into tech adoption policies. This chapter offers valuable insights for educators, policymakers, and researchers who want to use technology to create fairer and more inclusive assessment practices.

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INTRODUCTION

Assessment remains an intrinsic part of the entire teaching-learning process as it is basically meant to evaluate and keep details about a learner's progress, inform instruction, and hold the educational institution accountable (Beetham, 2013). From the point of view of traditional assessment, summative assessment has continued being the dominant voice having highlighted standardisation, objectivity, and comparative performance. From this perspective, such mechanisms fail to capture the realities of learner diversity, especially in inclusive and heterogeneous criteria of education. With educational systems advancing ever-more commitments to the basic principles of equity and justice, there stems the need growing for assessment practices to be reconceptualised as being responsive to the many needs, backgrounds, and abilities of all learners (Anderson & Dron, 2011; Kirkwood & Price, 2014).

Inclusion assessment means the design of evaluation procedures that accommodate the wide spectrum of learner profiles, including those with disabilities or with linguistic differences, socio-economic disadvantages, and alternative learning preferences (Altun, 2019; Ardiç, 2021). Whereas traditional types of evaluation tend to underscore the notion of equal treatment of all and thus do not look much into the aspect of individual differences; in contrast, inclusive assessment seeks to provide accessibility, fairness, flexibility, and some measure of learner agency. That is to say that there should be equal opportunities ideally afforded to any student in respect to demonstrating what he or she knows and can do, notwithstanding whether the person is disadvantaged by the current assessment instruments due to personal circumstances or cognitive profiles (Redecker, 2017). Inclusive assessment, therefore, is not simply about the adjustment and accommodation of conventional tests, and ultimately this calls for a paradigm shift that places emphasis on learner-centred approaches that acknowledge multiple expressions of voice and various opportunities for participation (Beetham, 2013).

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