


# Chapter 16

## Fostering Effective Feedback and Mental Well-Being: Overcoming Challenges in Digital Education

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### **ABSTRACT**

*The swift emergence of digital learning has revolutionized education, presenting both benefits and challenges in preserving student well-being and providing fair access to technology. The current study examined the function of digital feedback systems, mental health assistance in online education, and methods to close the digital divide. Studies demonstrate that excellent digital feedback, marked by promptness, precision, and actionable insights, substantially improves student engagement and learning results. Nonetheless, issues like feedback overload and the requirement for dialogic feedback underscore the imperative to enhance digital evaluation methodologies. The shift to online learning, expedited by the COVID-19 epidemic, has heightened concerns regarding student mental health, since increased stress, loneliness, and anxiety adversely affect learning experiences. A collaborative strategy among educators, policymakers, and technology developers is crucial to establish a comprehensive digital learning environment that emphasizes academic*

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## **1. INTRODUCTION**

The rapid digitalization of education has revolutionized the way students learn, interact, and receive feedback. Zurkowski (1974) used Digital Literacy (DL) for the first time in literature and referred to it as “ability to identify, locate and examine information”. Gilster (1997) adds on to it suggesting that DL is linked to skills such as “access, evaluation and management of information used in learning processes”. As per Eshet-Alkalai (2012) digital learning is defined as “set of technical-procedural, cognitive and socio emotional skills necessary to live, learn and work in digital society” (European Commission, 2018). As educational institutions increasingly rely on digital tools, the need to develop effective strategies for assessment and feedback has become paramount. Recent research has emphasized the importance of adapting traditional pedagogical approaches to fit digital contexts. For instance, Van der Spoel et al. (2020) argues that digital tools, when used effectively, can enhance learning outcomes by providing more personalized and immediate feedback. Similarly, Bond et al. (2021) highlight the role of digital technologies in facilitating active learning and student engagement, particularly in remote learning environments.

At the same time, the mental well-being of students has emerged as a significant concern, as the shift to online learning environments introduces new stressors and challenges. The World Health Organisation (1948) defined mental health as “a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being, not merely the absence of disease”. Furthermore, The American Psychological Association (2018) defined mental health as “ a state of mind characterized by emotional wellbeing, good behavioural adjustment, relative freedom from anxiety and disabling symptoms, a capacity to establish constructive relationships and cope with the ordinary demands and stresses of life”. The World Health Organization (WHO) reported in 2021 that the prevalence of mental health issues among students has risen since the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, with many students experiencing heightened anxiety and depression due to isolation and increased screen time (WHO, 2021). Furthermore, Hasan and Bao (2020) highlights that digital learning environments can contribute to cognitive overload, leading to burnout and decreased academic performance. This is supported by research from Sahu (2020), which underscores the psychological impact of the abrupt transition to online learning during the pandemic, suggesting a need for strategies that address students' mental health.

In addition to these challenges, the digital divide remains a significant barrier to equitable access to education. The digital divide as given by World Telecommunication Report (2002) refers to it as the “gap between those who have access

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