

From Readiness to Performance: Modeling Student Success in Open Distance Learning Environments

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Abstract

The rapid expansion of e-learning and distance education has fundamentally reshaped higher education by enabling broader access to learning beyond geographical and temporal boundaries. While online and distance learning systems offer flexibility and inclusiveness, they also introduce new challenges related to student engagement, learning readiness, and academic success. Within the broader agenda of advancing Quality Education (SDG 4), understanding the factors that support students' academic achievement in digital learning environments has become increasingly important. This study, therefore, examines how motivation, self-efficacy, e-learning readiness, learning interaction, and student satisfaction collectively shape academic performance in an online distance learning context. Using a quantitative research design, data were collected from 877 undergraduate students in their early semesters at an open and distance learning university. The proposed relationships were analyzed using Structural Equation Modelling (SEM). The findings suggest that motivation and self-efficacy significantly strengthen students' readiness to engage in e-learning environments, which subsequently promotes more active learning interaction. Interaction emerges as a central factor influencing student satisfaction, while both satisfaction and e-learning readiness contribute directly to academic performance. Interestingly, readiness alone does not automatically translate into satisfaction, indicating that meaningful interaction remains essential in distance education settings. Rather than viewing academic success solely as a consequence of technological readiness, this study highlights the interconnected roles of psychological factors, learner engagement, and learning experience in supporting effective online and distance education. The findings offer practical insights for higher education institutions seeking to enhance the quality of e-learning implementation and promote inclusive, student-centered learning in the digital era.

Index Terms

Academic Performance, E-Learning Readiness, Interaction, Motivation, Self-Efficacy