

Outline for Literature Review

Title: “The positive and negative impacts of digital learning tools on student engagement in higher education since 2020.”

Research Question:

Since 2020, how have digital learning tools affected student engagement in higher education, both positively and negatively?

Aims and Objectives:

- Review how digital tools have been used in higher education since 2020.
- Examine positive and negative impacts of these tools on student engagement.
- Compare findings across different studies and contexts.
- Identify gaps and future research directions.

Scope:

- UK higher education.
- Broad range of digital tools including LMS, video platforms, collaboration apps, gamification, AI tutors and VR/AR.
- Studies published 2020-2024, reflecting the shift to digital learning after COVID-19.

Planned Structure:

Introduction: Context of digital learning post 2020 and importance of engagement.

Types of Digital Learning Tools: Overview and classification.

Positive Impacts: Accessibility, flexibility, participation, collaboration and personalisation.

Negative Impacts: Digital divide, fatigue, tool overload, reduced interaction and privacy issues.

Evidence and Contradictions: Compare differing findings across studies.

Methodological Critique: Strengths and weaknesses of survey-based, experimental and mixed-methods studies.

Gaps and Future Directions: Lack of long term studies, inclusivity and emerging AI/VR.

Conclusion: Summarise positives and negatives.

Initial Search Strategy:

Search terms: “digital learning tools” OR “educational technology” OR “online learning” OR “virtual learning environment” AND “student engagement” AND “higher education” AND 2020–2024.

Databases: Google Scholar, UoEO Library, JStor, Research Gate, IEEEExplore.