Digital Dependency and Coping Strategies on Oral Communication Proficiency of the Marginalized Learners

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ABSTRACT

This study examines the effects of digital dependency on the oral communication proficiency of marginalized learners, focusing on their coping strategies and digital competencies. Utilizing a quantitative research design, data were collected from 120 Grade 7 students at Valencia National High School through structured questionnaires assessing digital overuse, emotional state, dependence, and coping strategies. This study used quantitative research design. The study used a structured research questions and reliability was checked through Cronbach alpha. The level of marginalized learners' digital dependency, coping strategy, and oral communication proficiency were analyzed using descriptive statistics. Also, Pearson Correlation was used to analyze the significant relationship between oral comprehension and digital dependency and coping strategies. Further, regression analysis was utilized to explore and quantify the relationships between digital dependency and oral communication proficiency while also considering coping strategies and digital competencies as additional factors. The findings of this study reveal that marginalized learners exhibit a moderate level of digital competency and coping strategies, with emotional coping strategies proving more effective than behavioral ones. The complex relationship between digital dependency and oral communication skills is characterized by both positive and negative impacts: while digital tools can enhance communication opportunities and build self-confidence, excessive reliance on them may diminish face-to-face interaction skills and increase communication anxiety. This underscores the importance of interpersonal engagement in alleviating anxiety and highlights the need for educational frameworks that promote both digital and interpersonal competencies. Tailored interventions should focus on fostering self-confidence, enhancing proactive coping behaviors, and encouraging social inclusion to support marginalized learners in navigating the challenges of the digital age effectively.

Keywords: Digital dependency, coping strategies, oral comprehension proficiency

INTRODUCTION

Digital dependency has emerged as a critical issue in educational settings, particularly impacting marginalized learners who face unique communication challenges. The rapid advancement of technology has led many individuals to increasingly rely on digital platforms for social interactions and academic activities. While this shift can provide certain advantages, it also presents significant obstacles for those who struggle with effective oral communication skills—skills essential for academic success and social inclusion. For marginalized learners, heavy reliance on digital devices often results in social isolation and reduced face-to-face interaction, which can heighten anxiety related to verbal communication. Research indicates that excessive screen time can impede the development of these crucial skills, making it more difficult for individuals to engage in conversations, articulate their thoughts, and foster connections with others (Dhir et al., 2018; Young, 1999). Moreover, there exists a notable gap in understanding how digital dependency specifically affects the oral communication skills of marginalized learners. While numerous studies have examined the broader effects of internet addiction—such as diminished social skills and increased anxiety around communication (Griffiths, 1995; Young, 2010)—less attention has been paid to how these learners navigate their unique challenges. Local studies, such as those by Bartau-Rojas et al. (2022), emphasize that marginalized students often lack access to

resources necessary for developing effective communication skills, particularly in areas with insufficient educational infrastructure. Addressing these gaps is crucial for supporting these learners in overcoming their difficulties.

Several theoretical frameworks can help elucidate the relationship between digital dependency and oral communication skills among marginalized learners. Social Learning Theory suggests that individuals learn behaviors through observation and interaction within their environment. In the context of digital dependency, marginalized learners may struggle to observe and engage in effective oral communication due to limited face-to-face interactions. Cognitive Load Theory posits that excessive cognitive demands can hinder learning processes; thus, digital dependency may contribute to cognitive overload, particularly for marginalized learners who already face challenges in communication. Additionally, Ecological Systems Theory emphasizes the interconnectedness of various environmental factors affecting an individual's development, viewing digital dependency as a factor within the broader educational ecosystem that influences marginalized learners' communication skills.

The hypothesis guiding this research posits that increased digital dependency negatively impacts the oral communication skills of marginalized learners, leading to greater social isolation and anxiety regarding verbal interactions. It is anticipated that these learners will exhibit lower levels of oral communication proficiency compared to their peers with less reliance on digital platforms. To investigate this hypothesis, the primary aims of this research are threefold: first, to explore the relationship between digital dependency and oral communication skills among marginalized learners by analyzing how reliance on digital platforms affects their ability to communicate effectively in academic and social settings; second, to identify specific barriers faced by marginalized learners in developing oral communication skills by examining the unique challenges they encounter due to their reliance on technology; and third, to propose strategies for educators and policymakers that support marginalized learners in enhancing their oral communication abilities while navigating a digitally dependent educational landscape. By addressing these aims, this research seeks to provide valuable insights into how educational practices can be improved to better support marginalized learners in developing essential communication competencies amidst increasing digital dependency.

Objectives

The study examined the digital dependency and coping strategies on oral communication proficiency of the marginalized learners in Valencia National High School, for the SY 2024-2025. Specifically, it endeavored to:

1. To assess the level of digital compentency possessed by the marginalized learners in terms of:

    a. Overuse;

    b. Emotional state; and

    c. Dependence

2. To evaluate the level of coping strategies adapted by the marginalized learners in terms of:

    a. Emotional coping;

    b. Behavioral coping; and

    c. Cognitive coping.

3. To analyze the level of the oral comprehension proficiency of the marginalized learners in terms of:

    a. Verbal;

    b. Non-verbal; and

c. Engagement in communication.

4. To know the significant relationship between oral comprehension proficiency and:

a. Digital Dependency; and

b. Coping Strategies.

5. To identify whether specific variables, individually or in combination, can best predict the Oral Comprehension Proficiency of the marginalized learners.

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

This study utilized a quantitative design that focused on systematically collecting numerical data to assess the levels of digital competency among marginalized learners, specifically examining aspects such as overuse, emotional state, and dependence. Additionally, this study evaluated the coping strategies in terms of emotional, behavioral, and cognitive coping. The research utilized standardized questionnaires to quantitatively measure the competencies and coping strategies, alongside oral comprehension proficiency assessed through standardized verbal and non-verbal communication tasks, as well as engagement in communication activities.

Participants of the Study

The participants for this study are the one hundred (120) grade 7 identified marginalized learners from Valencia National High School for the (S.Y.) 2024-2025.

Statistical Technique

The study used a structured research questions and reliability was checked through Cronbach alpha. The level of marginalized learners' digital dependency, coping strategy, and oral communication proficiency were analyzed using descriptive statistics. Also, Pearson Correlation was used to analyze the significant relationship between oral comprehension and digital dependency and coping strategies. Further, regression analysis was utilized to explore and quantify the relationships between digital dependency and oral communication proficiency while also considering coping strategies and digital competencies as additional factors.

Sampling Procedure

The researcher employed random sampling to ensure that the population are adequately represented in the sample.

Data Gathering Procedure

The study developed a structured questionnaire to measure various aspects of digital competency, coping strategies, and oral comprehension proficiency among marginalized learners. The instrument included items assessing digital overuse, emotional state, dependence, emotional coping, behavioral coping, cognitive coping, and both verbal and non-verbal oral comprehension skills. The questionnaire was formulated based on existing literature and relevant frameworks to ensure its comprehensiveness.

Following the development of the research instrument, a validation process was undertaken by the expert teachers to establish its reliability and validity. After refining the instrument, a pilot test was conducted at Dagatkidavao Integrated School to identify any issues related to the clarity and functionality of the questionnaire.

Once the research instrument was finalized, a formal letter requesting permission to conduct the study was sent to Valencia National High School. This letter outlined the study's purpose, significance, and procedures,

ensuring ethical compliance and transparency with school officials. Upon receiving approval, data collection commenced with Grade 7 identified as marginalized.

After data collection, responses were coded for analysis using appropriate statistical methods to identify patterns and relationships.

Finally, the findings from the data analysis were compiled into a comprehensive report. The results were interpreted in relation to the research questions, highlighting key patterns and insights regarding digital dependency, coping strategies, and oral comprehension among marginalized learners. Conclusions were drawn from these findings, along with recommendations for educators and policymakers.

Presentation, Analysis, and Interpretation of Data

Level of Digital Competency of the marginalized learners in terms of overuse, emotional state, and dependence.

Table 1 shows the summary of students' level of digital dependence in terms of overuse, emotional state, and dependence. The overall mean score for the students' level of digital dependency is 3.28, which indicates a moderate level of digital competency among marginalized learners. This score falls within the range of 3.51 to 4.50, classified as "Agree", suggesting that students generally feel positively about their digital skills but do not exhibit strong proficiency. The moderate interpretation implies that while these learners are capable of using digital tools, there is significant room for improvement in their skills and confidence.

Table 1. Level of Digital Dependency of the marginalized learners in terms of overuse, emotional state, and dependence

Indicators	Mean	Descriptive Rating	Qualitative Interpretation
Overuse	3.21	Neutral	Moderate
Emotional State	3.42	Neutral	Moderate
Dependence	3.22	Neutral	Moderate
Overall Mean	3.28	Neutral	Moderate

Rating	Scale	Descriptive Rating	Qualitative Interpretation
5	4.51-5.00	Strongly Agree	Highly Positive
4	3.51-4.50	Agree	Positive
3	2.51-3.50	Neutral	Moderate
2	1.51-2.50	Disagree	Negative
1	1.00-1.50	Strongly Disagree	Highly Negative

Research supports these findings by highlighting the positive impact of digital literacy initiatives on marginalized communities. For instance, a study published in the Indonesian Journal of Studies on Humanities, Social Sciences, and Education found that digital literacy programs significantly enhance technological skills among marginalized groups, leading to improved socio-economic outcomes and better access to services (Prasastiningtyas et al., 2024). This aligns with the observation that moderate levels of digital competency can lead to increased opportunities for employment and community participation.

Conversely, some literature presents contrasting perspectives regarding the challenges faced by marginalized

learners in achieving higher levels of digital competency. Research indicates that systemic barriers, such as limited access to technology and inadequate training resources, can hinder the development of digital skills among these populations (Hafifah, 2019; SMERU Research Institute, 2022). These studies emphasize that despite the existence of programs aimed at improving digital literacy, many marginalized individuals still struggle due to infrastructural limitations and socio-cultural factors that impede their engagement with technology.

According to Social Learning Theory, as proposed by Albert Bandura, marginalized learners can enhance their digital skills by observing peers who successfully navigate technology, thereby modeling effective behaviors (Prasastiningtyas et al., 2024). This observational learning fosters confidence and competence, leading to improved socio-economic outcomes. However, Cognitive Load Theory suggests that systemic barriers, such as limited access to technology and inadequate training resources, can create a high cognitive load for these learners, hindering their ability to absorb new information (Hafifah, 2019; SMERU Research Institute, 2022). The moderate levels of digital competency observed indicate that while some learners can manage cognitive demands effectively, others may struggle due to these constraints. Finally, Ecological Systems Theory, developed by Urie Bronfenbrenner, emphasizes the complex interplay between individuals and their environments. The challenges faced by marginalized learners in achieving higher digital competency are influenced by various ecological factors, including family support and community resources. Despite existing programs aimed at improving digital literacy, many individuals encounter infrastructural limitations and socio-cultural barriers that impede their engagement with technology (Hafifah, 2019; SMERU Research Institute, 2022). Thus, a comprehensive approach that incorporates these theoretical perspectives is essential for designing targeted interventions that promote digital competency and socio-economic inclusion among marginalized learners.

In summary, while the moderate level of digital competency among marginalized learners suggests potential for growth, it also underscores the need for targeted interventions to address barriers and enhance access to digital resources and training opportunities.

Level of coping strategies of the marginalized learners in terms of emotional coping, behavioral coping, and cognitive coping.

The overall mean score for the level of coping strategies among marginalized learners is 3.34, which indicates a moderate level of coping strategies utilized by these students. This score falls within the range of 3.51 to 4.50, classified as "Agree" on the rating scale, suggesting that while learners generally employ coping strategies to manage stress and challenges, their effectiveness may not be optimal.

In terms of specific coping strategies, the mean scores reveal the following: Emotional Coping has a mean of 3.46 (SD = 0.65), indicating that students are moderately effective in managing their emotional responses to stressors. Behavioral Coping shows a mean of 3.09 (SD = 0.73), suggesting that while some proactive behaviors are employed, they may not be as robust or consistent as needed. Lastly, Cognitive Coping has the highest mean score at 3.47 (SD = 0.71), indicating that students are somewhat adept at using cognitive strategies to navigate their challenges.

Table 2. Level of coping strategies of the marginalized learners in terms of emotional coping, behavioral coping, and cognitive coping

Indicators	Mean	Descriptive Rating	Qualitative Interpretation
Emotional Coping	3.46	Neutral	Moderate
Behavioral Coping	3.09	Neutral	Moderate
Cognitive Coping	3.47	Neutral	Moderate
Overall Mean	3.34	Neutral	Moderate

Rating	Scale	Descriptive Rating	Qualitative Interpretation
5	4.51-5.00	Strongly Agree	Highly Positive
4	3.51-4.50	Agree	Positive
3	2.51-3.50	Neutral	Moderate
2	1.51-2.50	Disagree	Negative
1	1.00-1.50	Strongly Disagree	Highly Negative

These findings suggest that marginalized learners possess a foundational level of coping skills but may benefit from further development and support to enhance their coping effectiveness. The moderate scores across all indicators imply that while these learners can utilize various coping mechanisms, there is significant room for improvement in their overall approach to managing stress.

Supporting research aligns with these results, highlighting the importance of effective coping strategies among marginalized populations. A study conducted by Liverpool et al. (2024) found that marginalized students often employ a variety of coping mechanisms, including emotional and problem-focused strategies, to navigate their unique challenges. This research emphasizes the need for tailored support systems to enhance the coping abilities of marginalized learners, ultimately improving their mental health and academic performance.

Conversely, some literature presents a more critical view regarding the effectiveness of coping strategies among marginalized learners. Research indicates that many students from marginalized backgrounds face significant barriers that hinder their ability to implement effective coping mechanisms (Hughes & Maas, 2017). For example, systemic issues such as discrimination and lack of access to mental health resources can exacerbate stress and limit the effectiveness of available coping strategies. Additionally, studies have highlighted that dysfunctional coping strategies, such as avoidance is prevalent among marginalized students facing overwhelming challenges (Simon, 2022). These maladaptive strategies can further impede academic performance and emotional well-being, suggesting that while some learners may report moderate levels of coping ability, underlying issues may prevent them from effectively managing stress.

Cognitive Load Theory suggests that systemic barriers, such as discrimination and limited access to mental health resources, increase cognitive load, making it difficult for marginalized students to implement effective coping strategies (Hughes & Maas, 2017). The moderate scores in coping ability indicate that while these learners possess foundational skills, overwhelming challenges may hinder their effectiveness. Additionally, Ecological Systems Theory emphasizes the influence of broader systemic factors on individual behavior. Research shows that inadequate access to support systems can exacerbate stress and limit the effectiveness of coping mechanisms (Simon, 2022). Therefore, addressing these systemic barriers is essential for enhancing the coping abilities of marginalized learners and improving their mental health and academic performance.

Level of the Oral Comprehension Proficiency of the marginalized learners in terms of verbal, non-verbal, and engagement in communication.

The overall mean score for the level of oral comprehension proficiency among marginalized learners is 3.44, which indicates a moderate level of proficiency across the assessed indicators. This score falls within the "Moderate" range according to the established rating scale, suggesting that while these learners demonstrate some capability in oral comprehension, there is still considerable room for enhancement.

Examining the specific indicators, Verbal Comprehension has a mean score of 3.20 (SD = 0.45), categorized as moderate, which suggests that students may face challenges in understanding and producing verbal language effectively. In contrast, Non-Verbal Comprehension shows a higher mean score of 3.59 (SD = 0.38), interpreted as positive, indicating that learners are more adept at interpreting non-verbal cues and gestures. Lastly, Engagement in Communication has a mean score of 3.51 (SD = 0.54), also classified as positive, reflecting that students are generally willing to participate in communicative interactions.

Table 3. Summary of students' level of oral comprehension proficiency

Indicators	Mean	Descriptive Rating	Qualitative Interpretation
Verbal	3.20	Neutral	Moderate
Non-verbal	3.59	Agree	Positive
Engagement in Communication	3.51	Agree	Positive
Overall Mean	3.44	Neutral	Moderate

Rating	Scale	Descriptive Rating	Qualitative Interpretation
5	4.51-5.00	Strongly Agree	Highly Positive
4	3.51-4.50	Agree	Positive
3	2.51-3.50	Neutral	Moderate
2	1.51-2.50	Disagree	Negative
1	1.00-1.50	Strongly Disagree	Highly Negative

These findings imply that marginalized learners possess a foundational level of oral comprehension skills but may struggle particularly with verbal communication. The higher scores in non-verbal comprehension and engagement suggest that while they can effectively engage in communication contexts, their verbal skills need targeted support and development.

Supporting research highlights the importance of both verbal and non-verbal communication skills among marginalized populations. For instance, Prasastiningtyas et al. (2024) found that digital literacy initiatives significantly enhance communication skills, including both verbal and non-verbal competencies, among marginalized communities, ultimately leading to improved socio-economic outcomes and educational engagement . This study underscores the potential for targeted interventions to positively influence learners' oral comprehension abilities.

Conversely, some literature presents a more critical perspective regarding the challenges faced by marginalized learners in developing strong oral comprehension skills. Research indicates that systemic barriers, such as limited access to quality education and resources, often hinder the development of both verbal and non-verbal communication skills (Hughes & Maas, 2017). Additionally, studies show that language minority learners frequently experience difficulties in reading and oral language skills due to inadequate support systems within educational settings . These factors contribute to lower levels of proficiency in verbal comprehension compared to their peers, indicating that while some students may exhibit moderate levels of oral comprehension proficiency, underlying challenges may impede their overall development.

Social Learning Theory suggests that learners develop skills by observing effective communicators in their environment. This implies that while marginalized learners may possess foundational oral comprehension skills, they require positive role models and structured practice opportunities to enhance their verbal communication (Prasastiningtyas et al., 2024). Conversely, Ecological Systems Theory highlights the impact of systemic barriers, such as limited access to quality education and resources, which hinder the development of both verbal and non-verbal communication skills (Hughes & Maas, 2017).

Relationship between oral comprehension and: Digital dependency and coping strategies

The overall mean correlation coefficient between oral comprehension and the assessed variables is 0.458 for digital dependency and 0.513 for coping strategies, both indicating significant positive relationships at the 0.01

level. This suggests that as digital dependency and coping strategies increase, so does the level of oral comprehension among marginalized learners.

Examining the range of correlations, we see specific values for each aspect of digital dependency: overuse (0.412), emotional state (0.422), and dependence (0.379). These values indicate moderate to strong positive correlations with oral comprehension, implying that higher levels of digital dependency are associated with better oral comprehension skills. Similarly, coping strategies show a range of correlations, with cognitive coping having the strongest relationship (0.562), followed by emotional coping (0.522) and behavioral coping (0.341). This indicates that effective coping strategies, particularly cognitive approaches, are closely linked to enhanced oral comprehension.

Table 4. Intercorrelations between Variables

VARIABLES			CORRELATION COEFFICIENT (r)	PROBABILITY (p)
Digital Dependency	-	OC	0.458	0.000**
Overuse	-	OC	0.412	0.000**
Emotional State	-	OC	0.422	0.000**
Dependence	-	OC	0.379	0.000**
Coping Strategies	-	OC	0.513	0.000**
Emotional Coping	-	OC	0.522	0.000**
Behavioral Coping	-	OC	0.341	0.000**
Cognitive Coping	-	OC	0.562	0.000**

Rating	Scale	Descriptive Rating	Qualitative Interpretation
5	4.51-5.00	Strongly Agree	Highly Positive
4	3.51-4.50	Agree	Positive
3	2.51-3.50	Neutral	Moderate
2	1.51-2.50	Disagree	Negative
1	1.00-1.50	Strongly Disagree	Highly Negative

The results suggest that marginalized learners who exhibit higher digital dependency and effective coping strategies tend to perform better in terms of oral comprehension. This finding aligns with existing literature that emphasizes the role of both digital engagement and adaptive coping mechanisms in facilitating learning and comprehension skills.

Supporting research highlights the positive impact of effective coping strategies on academic performance. For instance, a study by Proctor et al. (2005) found that students who employed effective cognitive strategies demonstrated improved reading comprehension outcomes, reinforcing the idea that coping mechanisms play a crucial role in learners' abilities to understand and process information. Furthermore, research indicates that appropriate use of digital tools can enhance learning experiences and comprehension skills among students, particularly when these tools are integrated into effective pedagogical practices.

Conversely, some literature presents a more critical view regarding the potential negative impacts of excessive digital dependency on learning outcomes. Studies have shown that high levels of digital addiction can lead to

cognitive deficits, including impaired attention and reduced academic performance (Aziz et al., 2021; Farchakh et al., 2020). These negative effects can counteract any potential benefits that might arise from digital engagement, suggesting that while some learners may demonstrate improved oral comprehension through digital dependency, others may suffer from detrimental effects due to overuse or addiction.

Cognitive Load Theory posits that effective coping strategies help manage cognitive load, facilitating better focus on comprehension tasks, as shown by Proctor et al. (2005), who found that adaptive strategies improve reading comprehension. However, excessive digital dependency may lead to cognitive overload, negatively impacting attention and academic performance (Aziz et al., 2021; Farchakh et al., 2020). Meanwhile, Ecological Systems Theory highlights the systemic barriers marginalized learners face, such as limited access to quality resources, which can hinder their effective use of digital tools. Thus, while some learners benefit from digital engagement and coping strategies, addressing these systemic challenges is crucial for fostering academic success.

Multiple Regression for the Independent Variables and Oral Comprehension Proficiency

The regression analysis presented in Table 5 indicates the predictive relationship between various independent variables and oral comprehension among marginalized learners. The results show that the model has a significant overall fit, with an *R* value of 0.589, indicating a moderate correlation between the predictors and oral comprehension. The adjusted R^2 value of 0.312 suggests that approximately 31.2% of the variance in oral comprehension can be explained by the variables included in the model.

Among the predictors, Cognitive Coping stands out with a significant positive unstandardized coefficient of 0.288 (p = 0.004), indicating that for each unit increase in cognitive coping strategies, there is an associated increase in oral comprehension. This suggests that learners who effectively utilize cognitive strategies are likely to demonstrate better oral comprehension skills. In contrast, Behavioral Coping shows a negative coefficient of -0.154 (p = 0.136), which is not statistically significant, indicating that behavioral coping may not effectively predict oral comprehension in this context.

Table 5. Summary of the Multiple Regression for the Independent Variables and Oral Comprehension Proficiency

Variables in the Model	Unstandardized Coefficient		Standardized Coefficient	t	Sig.	VIF	
	B	Std. Error	Beta				R^2
(Constant)	2.229	.194		11.479	.000		0.347
Overuse	.140	.074	.253	1.885	.062	3.120	
Emotional State	.042	.091	.058	.458	.647	2.770	
Dependence	.021	.120	.036	.178	.859	6.933	
Emotional Coping	.007	.130	.011	.051	.959	8.252	
Behavioral Coping	-.154	.102	-.294	-1.503	.136	6.616	
Cognitive Coping	.288	.099	.533	2.902	.004	5.830	
R = 0.589	Adjusted R^2=312		F = 10.013	DW=1.966	Sig. = .000		

Supporting literature emphasizes the importance of cognitive strategies in enhancing comprehension skills. For example, a study by Proctor et al. (2005) found that students employing effective cognitive strategies

demonstrated improved reading and listening comprehension outcomes, reinforcing the notion that cognitive coping mechanisms are crucial for academic success. Additionally, research has shown that strong cognitive skills correlate positively with better overall academic performance, particularly in language-related tasks (Catts et al., 2005). This aligns with the findings from this study, suggesting that enhancing cognitive coping strategies could lead to improved oral comprehension among marginalized learners.

Conversely, some literature presents a more critical perspective regarding the predictive capabilities of coping strategies and their effectiveness in improving comprehension skills. For instance, studies have indicated that excessive reliance on digital tools may hinder the development of essential cognitive skills necessary for effective comprehension (Aziz et al., 2021). Furthermore, research has highlighted that behavioral coping strategies can sometimes lead to avoidance behaviors rather than constructive engagement with learning materials (Farchakh et al., 2020). This suggests that while cognitive coping appears to be a strong predictor of oral comprehension, other factors—such as overreliance on technology or maladaptive behavioral strategies—may negatively impact learners' overall comprehension abilities.

Cognitive Load Theory suggests that effective cognitive strategies help manage the limited capacity of working memory, enhancing comprehension skills (Proctor et al., 2005). However, excessive reliance on digital tools may lead to cognitive overload, impairing essential cognitive skills necessary for effective comprehension (Aziz et al., 2021). Meanwhile, Ecological Systems Theory highlights the systemic barriers marginalized learners face, such as limited access to quality education and resources, which can hinder the development of strong cognitive skills (Hughes & Maas, 2017). These challenges may result in maladaptive coping strategies, such as avoidance rather than constructive engagement with learning materials (Farchakh et al., 2020). Therefore, addressing these ecological barriers is crucial for fostering effective cognitive strategies and improving overall comprehension skills among marginalized learners.

CONCLUSIONS

Based on the findings of the study, the following conclusions were drawn:

The study on marginalized learners' digital dependency, coping strategies, and oral comprehension proficiency reveals significant insights into their educational experiences and challenges. The findings indicate that these learners exhibit a moderate level of digital competency, with an overall mean score of 3.28. This suggests that while they possess some digital skills, there is considerable room for improvement, particularly in the areas of overuse, emotional state, and dependence on technology. Supporting literature emphasizes the positive impact of digital literacy initiatives on enhancing technological skills and socio-economic outcomes (Prasastiningtyas et al., 2024), highlighting the need for targeted programs to empower these students further. In terms of coping strategies, the overall mean score of 3.34 indicates a moderate effectiveness in managing stress. Emotional coping scored the highest at 3.46, followed by cognitive coping at 3.47, while behavioral coping lagged at 3.09. These results suggest that although learners have foundational coping skills, there is a need for further development to enhance their effectiveness in navigating challenges (Liverpool et al., 2024). Research also points out systemic barriers that limit the ability of marginalized students to implement effective coping mechanisms (Hughes & Maas, 2017; Simon, 2022).The analysis of oral comprehension proficiency reveals an overall mean score of 3.44, indicating moderate proficiency across verbal (3.20), non-verbal (3.59), and engagement in communication (3.51). While learners show competence in non-verbal contexts, their verbal skills require targeted support (Hughes & Maas, 2017). Correlation analysis demonstrates significant positive relationships between oral comprehension and both digital dependency (0.458) and coping strategies (0.513), with cognitive coping showing the strongest correlation (0.562) (Proctor et al., 2005). Furthermore, multiple regression analysis identifies cognitive coping as a significant predictor of oral comprehension proficiency (B = 0.288, p = 0.004), reinforcing the critical role of cognitive strategies in enhancing comprehension skills among marginalized learners. Overall, this study underscores the necessity for comprehensive interventions aimed at improving digital literacy and coping strategies while addressing systemic barriers that hinder marginalized learners' educational progress. By focusing on enhancing cognitive coping strategies and providing robust digital literacy programs, educators can better support these learners in achieving improved oral comprehension and academic success.

These results can be connected to Social Learning Theory and Cognitive Load Theory. Social Learning Theory, proposed by Albert Bandura, emphasizes that learners acquire skills through observation and imitation of others in their social context. This suggests that marginalized learners can enhance their oral comprehension by observing peers or mentors who effectively utilize digital tools and coping strategies. The moderate levels of digital competency indicate a need for positive role models within their educational environments to foster better learning outcomes. On the other hand, Cognitive Load Theory posits that effective cognitive strategies help manage the limited capacity of working memory during learning tasks. The findings that cognitive coping strategies correlate strongly with oral comprehension proficiency suggest that these strategies help learners navigate cognitive demands more effectively, ultimately enhancing their understanding and processing of information. However, excessive reliance on digital tools can lead to cognitive overload, negatively impacting comprehension abilities (Aziz et al., 2021; Farchakh et al., 2020). Therefore, addressing both observational learning opportunities and cognitive load management is essential for improving educational outcomes among marginalized learners while also providing robust support systems to mitigate systemic barriers hindering their progress.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the study's conclusions, several straightforward research recommendations can be made. First, develop and evaluate digital literacy programs specifically for marginalized learners to improve their digital skills, especially in managing technology use. Next, conduct studies on effective coping strategies, focusing on enhancing cognitive coping, which is linked to better oral comprehension. Additionally, explore how digital literacy and coping strategies interact to improve educational outcomes. Research should also identify systemic barriers that hinder marginalized students' learning and suggest policy changes to support them. There should be a focus on improving verbal communication skills through targeted teaching methods. Finally, investigate the impact of emotional support systems in schools, such as counseling and peer support, on students' coping and academic success. By addressing these areas, future research can help create effective interventions that support marginalized learners' educational progress.

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