# The Influence of Digital Literacy on the Internship Performance of Bachelor of Science in Office Administration Students

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## ABSTRACT

Internship performance demonstrates how well students can apply knowledge, skills, and professional competencies in actual workplace settings. It serves as an important indicator of how well students are prepared for professional responsibilities. The primary objective of this study was to examine the correlation between digital literacy and internship performance. This study utilized a quantitative research approach through a non-experimental, descriptive correlational design. One set of adapted, modified survey questionnaires was administered to 191 office administration students at a local college in Santo Tomas, Davao del Norte. The statistical tools used in the study were Mean and Pearson r to determine the significant relationship between digital literacy and internship performance. The results revealed a strong positive relationship between digital literacy and internship performance, with an r-value of 0.623 and a p-value < 0.001. This indicates that higher levels of digital literacy are associated with better internship performance among students. The findings suggest that digital literacy plays an important role in enhancing students' ability to perform effectively in real workplace settings. Strengthening digital literacy skills may therefore help improve students' internship outcomes and better prepare them for future employment in office administration roles.

**Keywords:** Digital Literacy, Internship Performance, Office Administration Students, Santo Tomas, Davao del Norte.

## INTRODUCTION

Internship performance reflected how students carried out assigned tasks and responsibilities during internship placement (Soenarto, 2023). However, many interns demonstrated poor performance due to limited digital literacy skills, which hindered their ability to adapt to technology-driven office environments. According to Romance et al. (2025), students failed to meet workplace expectations due to limited competence in using digital tools for communication, documentation, and data management. Thi Ngoc Ha and Dakich (2022) found that students were unable to complete online tasks, struggled with basic software applications, and showed little initiative in learning new technologies. Furthermore, Raharjo (2023) stated that this deficiency affected overall productivity and professional growth, resulting in unsatisfactory internship outcomes and reduced confidence in future employability.

Based on the study of Umam and Maureen (2023), students failed to complete technology-based assignments, such as digital documentation, data processing, and online correspondence, due to their lack of familiarity with office software and digital platforms. Muslikhah and Kusuma (2022) found that students lacked confidence in using computer applications and were unable to adapt to the digital demands of the workplace. According to Halog and Galay (2024), students were not able to operate office software, manage digital files, or communicate through online platforms. In addition, Bornales et al. (2025) point out that the lack of technological competence hindered the ability to perform assigned duties, resulting in low internship evaluations and unsatisfactory learning outcomes.

Internships offer students the opportunity to gain practical experience by applying what they learned in the classroom to actual work situations. This real-world involvement helps strengthen essential skills like communication, collaboration, and critical thinking (Yi et al., 2025). Students who perform well during internships tend to have a competitive advantage when entering the job market. Studies indicate that individuals with internship experience demonstrate noticeably higher levels of job-related skills than those who have not undergone similar training (Yi et al., 2025). Therefore, Anjum (2020) emphasizes that internship performance plays a vital role in shaping students' professional growth and readiness for future employment.

There are various studies on digital literacy that link it to different performance-related factors. Innovative work behavior that is brought about by digital literacy is essential to success in an internship and employment (Mehmood, 2024). Digital literacy in organizations is associated with improved employee performance, suggesting that students with these skills are likely to perform well during internships (Supriyadi et al., 2025). Digital literacy had a significant relationship with the internship performance of Office Administration students, as it directly influenced job readiness and ability to perform professional tasks effectively (Winarno et al., 2024). This shows that digitally literate students are more likely to perform effectively during internships, demonstrating a strong connection between digital literacy and internship performance.

The research gap of the study lies in the limited exploration of how digital literacy specifically influences the internship performance of Bachelor of Science in Office Administration students at Santo Tomas College of Agriculture Science and Technology (STCAST). While existing studies address general factors affecting internship outcomes, few examine how varying levels of digital competence directly impact students' efficiency, adaptability, and professional readiness in technology-driven office environments. Moreover, there is a lack of research integrating both technical and behavioral dimensions of digital literacy and how these shape real-world internship experiences. This gap highlights the need for a focused investigation that connects digital literacy proficiency with actual internship performance outcomes among Office Administration students.

Addressing this issue now allows educational institutions to enhance curriculum, ensure that students develop relevant digital skills, and prepare them to succeed in an increasingly digitalized professional environment. The study is urgent because workplaces are becoming more technology-driven, requiring interns to possess strong digital and communication skills to meet organizational demands. Conducting this study is important because it provides insights to help schools strengthen digital literacy training, ensuring that Office Administration students are better prepared for modern professional settings. This study aligns with Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 4: Quality Education, as it supports inclusive and quality education by emphasizing digital literacy as a key skill for Office Administration students to perform effectively during internships.

**Statement Of The Problem**

This study aims to determine the relationship between digital literacy and internship performance. Additionally, this sought to answer the following questions:

1. What is the level of digital literacy among Office Administration students in terms of:

1.1 communication;
1.2 copyright;
1.3 critical thinking;
1.4 character;
1.5 citizenship;
1.6 curation;
1.7 connectedness;
1.8 creativity; and
1.9 collaboration?

2. What is the level of internship performance in terms of grade in OA14 Office Administration Internships?

3. Is there a significant relationship between digital literacy and internship performance?

## Hypothesis

The null hypothesis was tested at a 0.05 level of significance, stating that there is no significant relationship between digital literacy and internship performance.

## Theoretical Framework

This study is anchored on Gilster's Digital Literacy Theory (1997), which explains that digital literacy extends beyond technical proficiency and involves understanding, evaluating, and responsibly using digital information that enhances the performance of employees. In support of this theory, Zulu et al. (2023) proposed that digital literacy is a vital competency for employability and performance in the modern workplace, emphasizing that it equips students to engage effectively in digital environments, contributing to academic and professional success.

This study is based on Kolb's Experiential Learning Theory (1984), which explains that students develop knowledge and skills by applying learning in real-life contexts and that learners actively transform theoretical understanding into practical experience. Supporting this idea, Devi and Thendral (2023) highlight that internship performance is enhanced when students effectively apply experiential learning principles during field training. The study shows that reflection and hands-on application strengthen problem-solving skills, adaptability, and professional competence.

This study is grounded on Bandura's Social Cognitive Theory (2001), which emphasizes the role of self-efficacy, or one's belief in their ability to perform tasks successfully, as a major factor influencing learning and performance. Students with higher self-efficacy are more likely to perform confidently in technology-based environments. Supporting this concept, Winarno et al. (2024) found that digital literacy and self-efficacy have a significant relationship with students' job readiness and internship performance. Their findings demonstrate that mastery of digital skills combined with confidence leads to higher productivity and improved internship outcomes.

## Conceptual Framework

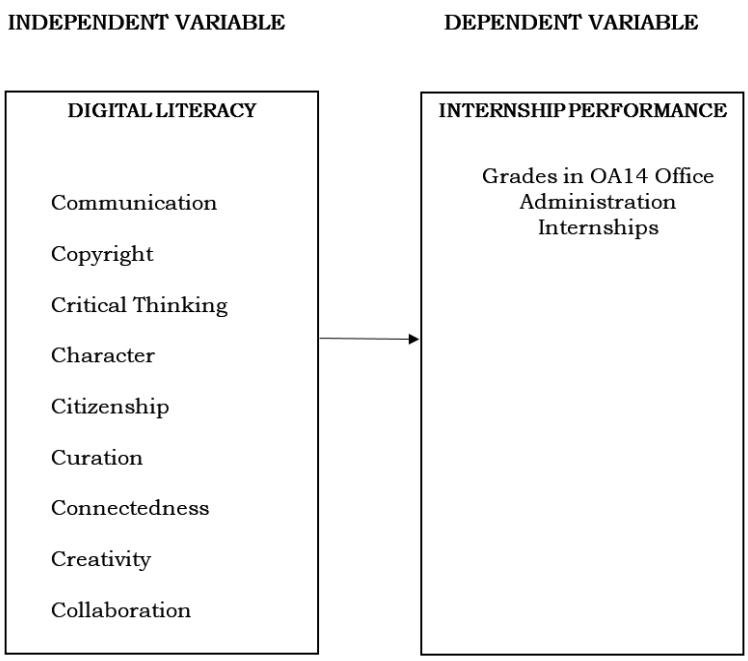


**Figure 1. The Conceptual Framework of the Study**

The conceptual framework as shown in Figure 1, outlined the study's variables.

The independent variable of the study was digital literacy. This variable consisted nine (9) indicators, which were: communication, copyright, critical thinking, character, citizenship, curation, connectedness, creativity, and collaboration (Amin et al., 2021).

The dependent variable of the study was internship performance. This variable was assessed by the grades students received during their internships.

# METHODOLOGY

## Research Design

This study utilized a quantitative, non-experimental, descriptive correlational design to describe the data gathered on the levels of two variables related to digital literacy and internship performance. According to Nwabuko (2024), non-experimental quantitative research allows researchers to collect numerical data and analyze it statistically to determine patterns, relationships, or differences among variables as they naturally occur. Fischer et al. (2023) explain that this design is appropriate when ethical or practical constraints prevent experimental control or manipulation. As noted by Ghanad (2023), a descriptive correlational approach aims to describe the characteristics of a population while simultaneously identifying the statistical relationships among variables. Duckett (2021) describes this research approach that does not establish causation but rather explores how one variable is associated with another.

This study employed a quantitative, non-experimental, descriptive correlational research design to explore the effect of digital literacy on the internship performance of Bachelor of Science in Office Administration students. The quantitative method enabled the researchers to collect numerical data through structured questionnaires to assess students' digital literacy and internship performance. As the study did not involve any manipulation of variables, the non-experimental design was suitable for examining existing situations. The descriptive correlational approach was used to identify the relationship and extent of the connection between students' digital literacy skills and internship performance, providing a deeper understanding of how one factor may affect the other.

## Research Subject

The respondents of the study were 191 out of 378 4th year Office Administration students from a local college in Santo Tomas, Davao del Norte. The researchers used the Raosoft calculator. The appropriate sample size was computed based on a 5% margin of error, 95% confidence level, and 50% response distribution, following the recommendation of Salman et al. (2023). The respondents were selected through a stratified random sampling technique. According to Iliyasu and Etikan (2021), stratified random sampling divides a population into homogeneous, mutually exclusive groups based on specific classifications, from which samples are randomly selected from each group to ensure fair representation of all segments.

## Research Instrument

The researchers used one (1) adapted survey questionnaire for the independent variable and students' grades in internship as the dependent variable. The questionnaires were validated by the panelists and an external validator to ensure their validity.

*Digital Literacy Questionnaire*. The questionnaire that was used to measure the level of digital literacy was adapted from the study titled "Development and Validation of Digital Literacy Scale (DLS) and Its Implication for Higher Education" by Amin et al. (2021). The instrument consisted of 36 items covering the following nine (9) indicators: Communication (7 items), Copyright (4 items), Critical Thinking (3 items), Character (3 items), Citizenship (4 items), Curation (3 items), Connectedness (5 items), Creativity (4 items), and Collaboration (3 items). Respondents rated each item using a 5-point Likert scale, which was interpreted as follows: 5 for "Strongly Agree", 4 for "Agree", 3 for "Neutral", 2 for "Disagree", and 1 for "Strongly Disagree".

The following scale, range, descriptive equivalent, and interpretation were applied in determining the level of digital literacy.

| Scale | Range of Means | Descriptive Equivalent | Interpretation |
|---|---|---|---|
| 5 | 4.20-5.00 | Very High | Digital literacy was always manifested. |
| 4 | 3.40-4.19 | High | Digital literacy was oftentimes manifested. |
| 3 | 2.60-3.39 | Moderate | Digital literacy was sometimes manifested. |
| 2 | 1.80-2.59 | Low | Digital literacy was seldom manifested. |
| 1 | 1.00-1.79 | Very Low | Digital literacy was least manifested. |

*Internship Performance Questionnaire*. In determining the level of internship performance, the researcher utilized the grades given by the internship instructor. These grades were based on the different outcomes performed by the students in accordance with the syllabus set by the Commission on Higher Education (CHED). The scoring guide for the internship performance of students was categorized into five levels.

The parameter limits were used for the interpretation for internship performance of college students studying in higher education.

| Score Interval | Descriptive Equivalent | Interpretation |
|---|---|---|
| 90 – 100 | Very high | Internship performance was outstanding. |
| 85 - 89 | High | Internship performance was very satisfactory. |
| 80 - 84 | Moderate | Internship performance was satisfactory. |
| 75 - 79 | Low | Internship performance was fairly satisfactory. |
| Below 75 | Very low | Internship performance does not meet expectations. |

**Statistical Treatment Of Data**

*Mean*. The mean is a statistical measure that represents the central tendency of a dataset. It is calculated by summing all the values in a sample and dividing the total by the number of observations (Hurley & Tenny, 2023). This was used to determine the level of digital literacy and internship performance of the respondents.

*Pearson R*. The Pearson r correlation coefficient is a measure that quantifies the strength and direction of the linear relationship between two continuous variables, and it is widely used in educational research to examine associations between variables (Jeon & Yamashita, 2024). This was used to determine the relationship between digital literacy and internship performance.

# RESULTS

## Level of digital literacy

The descriptive statistics for determining the level of digital literacy are shown in Table 1, with an overall mean of 4.28 and a standard deviation (SD) of 0.81, indicating a very high level of digital literacy. This indicates that the digital literacy of office administration students was always manifested. The results also showed that citizenship had the highest mean of 4.65 and SD of 0.59, with a descriptive level of very high, indicating that citizenship was always manifested. This means that office administration students communicate with others respectfully while using technology, are aware of the consequences of violating cyber laws, accept and follow the terms and conditions for accessing information, and respect cultural differences in the online environment. Moreover, connectedness had the lowest mean of 3.77 and an SD of 1.25, with a descriptive level of high, indicating that connectedness was often observed. This implies that office administration students were often involved in online communities and projects, actively participated in online campaigns and polls or surveys, and encouraged community members to share their concerns and issues on social media.

Table 1
*Level of digital literacy*

| Indicators | Mean | SD | Descriptive Equivalent |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1. Communication | 4.29 | 0.77 | Very High |
| 2. Copyright | 4.43 | 0.69 | Very High |
| 3. Critical thinking | 4.17 | 0.88 | High |
| 4. Character | 4.56 | 0.63 | Very High |
| 5. Citizenship | 4.65 | 0.59 | Very High |
| 6. Curation | 4.08 | 0.91 | High |
| 7. Connectedness | 3.77 | 1.25 | High |
| 8. Creativity | 4.18 | 0.82 | High |
| 9. Collaboration | 4.43 | 0.71 | Very High |
| **Overall** | **4.28** | **0.81** | **Very High** |

## Level of internship performance

The results for internship performance were presented in Table 2. The data showed that office administration students obtained an average grade of 91.10 in OA14 Office Administration Internships, with a standard deviation of 4.25. This level of performance was described as very high, indicating that internship performance was outstanding. This indicates that students performed excellently during their internships. The overall findings suggest that students' internship performance reflects their ability to apply knowledge, skills, and workplace competencies effectively in a real work environment.

Table 2
*Level of internship performance*

| Indicators | Mean | SD | Descriptive Equivalent |
|---|---|---|---|
| Grade in OA14 Office Administration Internships | 91.10 | 4.25 | Very High |

## Correlation between digital literacy and internship performance

Table 3 displays the significant relationship between the independent variable (digital literacy) and the dependent variable, which is the internship performance. The overall coefficient of correlation was 0.623 with a p-value of <0.001, which was lower than the 0.05 level of significance. This implies a significant relationship between digital literacy and internship performance, as the p-value was <0.001. Therefore, the null hypothesis

of no significant relationship was rejected. The overall correlation coefficient of 0.623 indicates a strong positive relationship between the two variables.

Table 3
*Significance of the relationship between digital literacy and internship performance*

| Variables Correlated | Mean | r | p-value | Decision on $H_o$ | Decision on Relationship |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| *Digital literacy* | 4.28 | | | | |
| *Internship performance* | 91.10 | | | | |
| | | 0.623** | <0.001 | Rejected | Significant |

## DISCUSSIONS

### Level of digital literacy

The results revealed that office administration students had a high level of digital literacy, which means digital literacy is always manifested. This means that office administration students consistently demonstrate the skills and knowledge to effectively use digital tools and technology in their academic and professional activities. These findings confirmed the statement of Bachtiar et al. (2024) that digital literacy fosters better educational quality and social harmony, as students with higher digital literacy engage more effectively in collaborative learning and social interactions. It was also supported by the statement of Panduwinata and Setiawati (2024) that digital literacy has a significant positive relationship with critical thinking skills among office administration students, suggesting that digital tools help in data analysis and argument development. Moreover, Susanti and Lestari (2025) found that digital literacy enhances students' skills, motivation, and interest in learning.

### Level of internship performance

The results revealed that office administration students had a high level of internship performance, which means internship performance is outstanding. This indicates that office administration students consistently demonstrate the ability to apply knowledge, skills, and workplace competencies effectively during an internship. These findings confirmed the statement of Halog and Limos-Galay (2024) that the learning outcomes of office administration students are very high and directly correlate with internship performance. It was further supported by Saleh et al. (2023) that internships help develop essential soft skills, including communication and teamwork, which are vital for success in office administration roles. Additionally, Sholeha and Widagdo (2025) emphasized that student engagement in administrative services supports employees and increases operational efficiency.

### Correlation between digital literacy and internship performance

The correlation between digital literacy and internship performance revealed a strong positive correlation. Furthermore, there was a significant relationship between digital literacy and internship performance since the probability value is $p<0.001$, which is lower than the 0.05 level of significance. These findings affirmed the statement of Imjai et al. (2024) that there is a relationship between digital literacy and internship performance, which says that digital literacy significantly influences internship performance outcomes, particularly when combined with self-directed learning skills. Also, the results affirmed the statement of Amzarina and Murwaningsih (2025), that digital literacy has a positive and significant influence on students' work readiness, supporting its relevance to internship performance.

# CONCLUSIONS

It was revealed that digital literacy was at a very high descriptive level, consistently observed. Therefore, office administration students consistently demonstrated the skills and knowledge to effectively use digital tools and technology in their academic and professional activities. It was also revealed that internship performance had a descriptive level of very high, which was outstanding. Therefore, office administration students consistently demonstrated the ability to apply their knowledge, skills, and workplace competencies effectively during their internship.

The study's findings showed a significant relationship between digital literacy and internship performance. The findings of the study support the statement of Winarno et al. (2024) that digital literacy was significantly related to the internship performance of Office Administration students, as it directly affected their work readiness and capacity to carry out professional tasks effectively. The findings are also consistent with the study of Supriyadi et al. (2025), which states that digital literacy within organizations is associated with enhanced employee performance, suggesting that students who possess these skills are likely to perform well during internships.

In addition, these results conform to Kolb's Experiential Learning Theory (1984), which suggests that students develop knowledge and skills by applying theoretical concepts in real-life contexts and actively transforming their understanding into practical experience.

# RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings, office administration students may further improve connectedness and digital competence by actively engaging in various online communities and digital activities. Students may take part in volunteer work through online platforms by assisting local government units (LGUs) and non-government organizations in tasks such as managing social media accounts, encoding data, designing digital materials, or helping moderate online information campaigns. Students may participate in or assist with online polls and surveys to help organizations gather feedback on the effectiveness of services, workplace systems, or community programs, thereby supporting informed, data-driven decisions. They may also encourage and assist community members in responsibly posting concerns and issues on social media to promote awareness, advocacy, and constructive communication. Through regular involvement in these digital activities, students may strengthen their skills in using digital tools, efficiently completing online tasks, navigating basic software applications, and developing initiative in learning new technologies, which may help address limitations in digital literacy, enhance performance, and enable them to meet workplace expectations in technology-driven office environments.

Based on the very high level of internship performance, office administration students may continue to maintain and further enhance their performance during their internship. Students may consistently apply academic knowledge and technical skills in actual workplace tasks, may demonstrate professionalism, and may show initiative in learning new responsibilities. They may also strengthen communication, teamwork, and time management skills while practicing the school's core values of efficiency, excellence, perseverance, humanness, and integrity in their tasks. By being proactive, adaptable, and open to feedback from supervisors, students can consistently demonstrate good conduct, adhere to ethical standards, and actively contribute to school programs and initiatives. Such engagement may further enhance internship performance, improve grades, and provide meaningful work experience that prepares them for future employment in office administration roles.

Based on the significant relationship between digital literacy and internship performance, the institution strengthens its office administration program by implementing a structured digital literacy orientation or refresher course prior to internship deployment. The program may be designed to review essential IT skills needed for communication, documentation, data management, and task coordination in the workplace. The institution may also integrate responsible and ethical use of technology into the curriculum and ensure that students are exposed to commonly used office digital systems. Through these institutional initiatives, students

may be better prepared for real work environments, leading to improved efficiency, collaboration, and overall internship performance.

Finally, future researchers may further examine the relationship between digital literacy and internship performance by including a wider range of respondents from different programs, institutions, or industries to improve the generalizability of the findings. They may also consider using additional variables, such as work readiness, motivation, supervision quality, or organizational support, to gain a deeper understanding of factors that influence internship performance. Moreover, future studies may employ qualitative methods, such as interviews or observations, to provide more detailed insights into how digital literacy skills are applied during internships. Conducting longitudinal studies may also help determine how digital literacy affects students' performance over time.

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