
**E-ISSN:** 2706-8927
**P-ISSN:** 2706-8919
www.allstudyjournal.com
IJAAS 2023; 5(1): 74-79
Received: 08-11-2022
Accepted: 12-12-2022

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# Empirical study on student satisfaction, learning outcomes, and usability of EdTech Apps

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**DOI:** https://www.doi.org/10.33545/27068919.2023.v5.i1a.1399

**Abstract**
In the wake of technological advancements and the shift to digital education during the COVID-19 pandemic, Educational Technology (EdTech) applications have become a cornerstone of contemporary learning environments. This empirical study investigates student satisfaction, learning outcomes, and usability of EdTech apps among higher education students in India. Using a mixed-method research design, data were collected from 400 university students via structured questionnaires and in-depth interviews. The findings reveal that while EdTech apps significantly improve flexibility, accessibility, and personalized learning, concerns regarding content quality, user interface, and lack of real-time interaction remain. The study highlights the importance of usability features and student-centered design in enhancing learning outcomes and satisfaction, offering key recommendations for educators, app developers, and policymakers.

**Keywords:** EdTech, student satisfaction, learning outcomes, usability, higher education, educational technology

## 1. Introductions

The rapid advancement of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) has brought about a paradigm shift in the way education is delivered, consumed, and experienced globally. Among the most significant innovations in this sphere is the rise of Educational Technology (EdTech) applications, which have emerged as powerful tools to support and enhance the learning process. EdTech applications now play an integral role in formal education systems, professional development, and lifelong learning, offering new avenues for interactive, accessible, and self-paced education that transcend traditional classroom boundaries.

With the increasing integration of online learning platforms, mobile applications, virtual classrooms, artificial intelligence (AI)-driven tools, and gamified learning environments, students today enjoy unprecedented access to a variety of learning resources and experiences. These technologies facilitate interactive multimedia content, real-time assessments, adaptive learning systems, and collaborative learning environments, offering flexibility that allows students to learn anytime, anywhere, and at their own pace. In particular, EdTech apps have gained popularity for their potential to cater to diverse learning styles, enabling visual, auditory, and kinesthetic learners to engage with content in ways that suit their preferences and needs.

The COVID-19 pandemic, which led to the closure of educational institutions worldwide, has significantly accelerated the adoption of EdTech. With millions of students displaced from their classrooms, EdTech apps became an essential medium for ensuring continuity in education. Governments, educational institutions, and private players turned to virtual learning environments, video conferencing tools, and specialized educational apps to mitigate the disruption caused by the pandemic. In countries like India, where the traditional education system had long relied on face-to-face teaching, this sudden transition to remote and digital learning environments highlighted both the potential and the challenges of EdTech-based learning.

Despite the massive surge in EdTech adoption and the growing investment in digital learning solutions, critical questions remain regarding the actual effectiveness of EdTech apps in fulfilling students' educational needs. While EdTech platforms are widely promoted for their convenience, interactive learning experiences, and personalized content delivery, there is a

lack of empirical research assessing their real impact on student learning outcomes and satisfaction. Most studies to date have focused on technological innovation and market growth, with limited exploration of how these tools affect students' academic performance, motivation, engagement, and overall learning experience, particularly in the context of higher education in developing countries.

One of the most pressing issues that have surfaced in recent discourse is the usability of EdTech apps—whether these applications are designed to be user-friendly, accessible to students from various backgrounds, and capable of providing a seamless learning experience without technological hurdles. Usability flaws such as poor interface design, complex navigation, and technical glitches can significantly hinder students' engagement and learning. Additionally, student satisfaction, which is a critical determinant of sustained usage and engagement with EdTech platforms, depends not only on the content quality but also on ease of use, interactivity, and alignment with curriculum goals.

Moreover, the actual learning outcomes achieved through EdTech apps—in terms of knowledge acquisition, skill development, and academic performance—remain under-investigated in empirical terms. While many EdTech companies claim that their platforms improve learning effectiveness, scientific evidence validating these claims, especially from the perspective of end-users (students), is limited. This gap is even more significant in developing nations like India, where students' access to technology, digital literacy levels, and socio-economic factors vary widely. Rural students and those from marginalized communities often face significant barriers to accessing and using EdTech effectively, raising questions about equity and inclusiveness in digital learning environments.

Therefore, this study seeks to address these gaps by conducting an empirical investigation into how university-level students perceive and experience EdTech applications in their academic pursuits. Specifically, this research focuses on analyzing three interrelated dimensions:

- Student satisfaction — assessing students' perceptions of the quality, relevance, and usability of EdTech apps.
- Learning outcomes — evaluating whether and to what extent EdTech apps contribute to improved academic understanding, retention of knowledge, and performance.
- Usability of EdTech apps — analyzing how user-friendly, accessible, and functional these apps are from the perspective of student users.

By focusing on these dimensions, the study aims to generate data-driven insights that can inform the development of more effective, user-centered EdTech solutions. Furthermore, this research will provide valuable recommendations for educators, EdTech developers, and policymakers to enhance the effectiveness of technology-driven education, ensure inclusive access, and improve student satisfaction and learning outcomes.

Ultimately, this study is significant as it moves beyond theoretical assertions about EdTech's potential and provides empirical evidence based on students' lived experiences. Understanding how students interact with, benefit from, or struggle with EdTech apps is crucial for shaping future educational practices in a way that is responsive to students' needs, expectations, and challenges, thereby bridging the gap between technology and pedagogy.

## 2. Review of Literature

The use of Educational Technology (EdTech) in contemporary education has grown exponentially over the past decade. As technology increasingly becomes embedded in daily life, its role in facilitating learning and education is now widely recognized. However, while EdTech apps hold immense potential to revolutionize education, their effectiveness depends on multiple factors, including design, usability, content quality, and alignment with pedagogical goals. This section critically reviews the relevant literature to understand the role of EdTech apps in education, focusing on their contributions to learning, factors affecting student satisfaction and outcomes, and the importance of usability.

### 2.1 EdTech Applications in Education

EdTech applications represent a diverse category of tools designed to enhance, supplement, or deliver education digitally. These apps offer a broad range of services, including but not limited to video-based lessons, interactive quizzes, gamified learning experiences, AI-driven personalized modules, real-time assessments, and virtual classroom environments (Kebritchi *et al*., 2017) [2].

The evolution of EdTech apps has been driven by a growing demand for flexible and accessible learning platforms that cater to the diverse needs of modern learners. As Selwyn (2016) [3] highlights, EdTech platforms have the unique ability to personalize learning experiences, allowing students to learn at their own pace, revisit content as needed, and engage with materials in formats that suit their individual learning styles (e.g., visual, auditory, kinesthetic). Additionally, the integration of gamification elements, such as points, badges, and leaderboards, has made learning more engaging for students, particularly younger learners who are accustomed to interactive and game-like environments. Many EdTech platforms also use artificial intelligence (AI) and adaptive learning algorithms to analyze user progress and recommend customized content, thereby providing a tailored educational experience that traditional classrooms often struggle to offer.

Furthermore, EdTech tools have proven to be vital in bridging geographical and infrastructural gaps, offering remote learning opportunities to students who may otherwise lack access to quality education due to location, disability, or economic constraints. However, despite these strengths, the success of EdTech depends heavily on how effectively these apps are designed, implemented, and adopted by learners and educators alike.

### 2.2 Student Satisfaction and Learning Outcomes

One of the key measures of EdTech effectiveness is student satisfaction, which is directly linked to engagement, learning motivation, and academic success. Chakraborty and Nafukho (2015) [5] argue that student satisfaction with EdTech platforms is influenced by multiple interconnected factors, including content relevance and quality, ease of use, interaction opportunities, technical support, and responsiveness of the system.

Studies have shown that when students find an EdTech platform easy to use and pedagogically sound, their level of satisfaction is significantly higher, which in turn positively

influences their learning outcomes (Voogt & Knezek, 2015) [6]. Satisfaction and usability are mutually reinforcing, as satisfied students are more likely to engage actively with learning materials and participate consistently in digital learning activities.

Furthermore, learning outcomes—defined in terms of knowledge acquisition, retention, critical thinking, and application of concepts—are often enhanced when students engage with interactive and well-structured EdTech tools. For instance, multimedia content such as video tutorials, animations, and interactive simulations can help students better understand complex concepts, thus improving comprehension and retention (Voogt & Knezek, 2015) [6].

However, it is important to note that student satisfaction is not merely a function of content delivery. It also depends on the social presence and interaction opportunities provided by the platform. Students often express greater satisfaction with EdTech platforms that incorporate collaborative tools, such as discussion forums, peer feedback mechanisms, and teacher-student communication channels, as these features replicate some of the interpersonal dynamics of traditional classrooms.

Another critical insight from existing literature is that student satisfaction and learning outcomes are influenced by prior exposure to technology, which means students with limited digital literacy may struggle to use EdTech apps effectively, potentially undermining their learning experience (Kebritchi *et al*., 2017) [2].

### 2.3 Usability of EdTech Apps

Usability is a central factor that determines the success and acceptance of EdTech apps among learners. It refers to the ease with which users can navigate the app, locate and access learning materials, interact with content, and achieve learning goals without unnecessary complexity or frustration (Tondeur *et al*., 2020) [4].

An intuitive user interface (UI), logical navigation flow, and responsive design are essential components of a usable EdTech app. Poorly designed interfaces, technical glitches, and complicated navigation pathways can not only frustrate users but also detract from the learning process, causing students to disengage from the app (Tondeur *et al*., 2020) [4].

From a pedagogical perspective, usability also encompasses the app's ability to support diverse learning activities, such as quizzes, interactive exercises, collaborative projects, and feedback sessions, in a seamless and integrated manner. If the platform fails to provide smooth transitions between learning tasks or lacks clear instructions and support mechanisms, students may struggle to focus on learning objectives.

Moreover, usability plays a significant role in determining how accessible EdTech apps are to students with varying levels of technological familiarity and digital skills. For many students, particularly those from rural or underprivileged backgrounds, limited exposure to advanced technology can make complex apps difficult to navigate. Therefore, simplified design, clear guidelines, and user-friendly interfaces are essential to ensure equitable access to EdTech platforms.

Furthermore, accessibility considerations—such as multilingual options, offline access, and compatibility with low-end devices—are critical for EdTech usability in developing countries. An app that is technically sophisticated but lacks accessibility and inclusivity features is unlikely to serve the needs of all learners effectively.

Thus, usability is not merely a technical requirement but a fundamental educational consideration that directly impacts student satisfaction, engagement, and learning outcomes. Developers of EdTech platforms need to prioritize usability as a core design principle, ensuring that the apps are easy to use, adaptive, and supportive of a wide range of learning needs.

### 2.4 Conclusion of Literature Review

In summary, the literature demonstrates that while EdTech apps hold great promise in personalizing education, enhancing engagement, and overcoming geographical barriers, their success hinges on student satisfaction, learning outcomes, and usability. These factors are deeply interconnected: high usability improves satisfaction, which in turn enhances learning outcomes. However, for EdTech to fulfill its transformative potential, it must address challenges related to design quality, content relevance, user experience, and inclusivity.

This review highlights the need for empirical studies, like the one undertaken in this research, to better understand how students experience EdTech apps in real educational settings, especially in diverse and resource-constrained contexts such as India. The next sections of this paper will explore how these issues manifest in practice, based on primary data collected from university students.

## 3. Objectives of the Study

- To assess student satisfaction levels with EdTech apps used for academic purposes.
- To evaluate the impact of EdTech apps on students' learning outcomes.

## 4. Research Methodology

The methodology adopted for this study has been carefully designed to ensure the collection of reliable, valid, and comprehensive data regarding students' experiences with EdTech apps, focusing on aspects such as satisfaction, learning outcomes, and usability. Recognizing the complexity of these interrelated constructs, this study uses a mixed-method research design that combines the strength of both quantitative and qualitative approaches. This combination allows for a holistic exploration of students' perspectives, capturing both measurable trends and nuanced insights.

### 4.1 Research Design

The study adopts a mixed-method research design, integrating quantitative surveys and qualitative interviews. This approach was chosen to address the multifaceted nature of the research objectives, which require both statistical evaluation of trends and in-depth understanding of student experiences.

The quantitative component of the research focuses on collecting structured and standardized data that allow for the analysis of patterns, relationships, and generalizations among a large population of students. This includes measuring students' satisfaction levels, perceived learning outcomes, and the usability of EdTech apps using pre-designed survey instruments.

In parallel, the qualitative component seeks to capture the individual voices, experiences, and deeper insights of

students that cannot be adequately represented through quantitative measures alone. Through semi-structured interviews, this component explores students' personal interactions with EdTech apps, perceived benefits, encountered challenges, and suggestions for improvement. By combining both methods, this study ensures a comprehensive understanding of the phenomenon under investigation, allowing for triangulation of data to enhance validity and credibility.

### 4.2 Sample and Sampling Method

The study sample consists of 400 university students enrolled in various undergraduate and postgraduate programs in urban and semi-urban regions of India. Given the rapid expansion of EdTech in Indian higher education, focusing on this demographic is both relevant and necessary to assess the current landscape and its challenges.

Sampling Strategy: Stratified Random Sampling

To ensure that the sample represents a diverse cross-section of students, a stratified random sampling technique was employed. The population was divided into strata based on key demographic and educational variables, including:

- Gender (male, female, other)
- Academic discipline (e.g., science, arts, commerce, engineering, management)
- Level of study (undergraduate, postgraduate)
- Socio-economic background (low, middle, high income)
- Geographical context (urban, semi-urban)

From each stratum, students were randomly selected to ensure equal representation and diversity, allowing the findings to reflect broad experiences and perspectives. This method not only enhances the generalizability of the results but also ensures that underrepresented groups (e.g., rural and low-income students) are included in the study, thereby addressing issues of equity in EdTech access and usage.

### 4.3 Tools for Data Collection

To gather comprehensive data, two main instruments were used:

#### 4.3.1 Structured Questionnaire

A structured questionnaire was designed to capture quantitative data on the following variables:

- Student satisfaction with EdTech apps, including overall experience, content quality, and technical performance.
- Perceived learning outcomes, such as improvements in academic performance, understanding of course materials, and exam readiness.
- Usability of EdTech apps, covering ease of navigation, accessibility of features, and user interface design.

The questionnaire included Likert-scale items (ranging from "Strongly Agree" to "Strongly Disagree") to measure agreement levels on various statements. It was pilot-tested with a small group of students (n=20) to refine question wording and ensure clarity.

#### 4.3.2 Semi-Structured Interviews

To complement the quantitative data, semi-structured interviews were conducted with a purposive sub-sample of 40 students from the larger pool. These interviews provided qualitative insights into students' personal experiences, challenges, and expectations regarding EdTech apps. The interviews explored:

- Students' first-hand experiences with specific EdTech apps.
- Perceived strengths and limitations of these platforms.
- Challenges faced in terms of technology access, content comprehension, and engagement.
- Recommendations for improving EdTech apps.

Interviews were conducted both face-to-face and via online platforms (e.g., Zoom, Google Meet), depending on participants' convenience and geographical location. Each interview lasted approximately 30-45 minutes, and all interviews were recorded (with consent) and transcribed for analysis.

### 4.4 Data Analysis Techniques

To analyze the data comprehensively, different techniques were applied for quantitative and qualitative datasets, ensuring rigorous examination of both numerical trends and thematic insights.

#### 4.4.1 Quantitative Data Analysis

The quantitative data from the structured questionnaires were analyzed using Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS), focusing on:

- Descriptive statistics, including means, percentages, and standard deviations, to summarize students' satisfaction, usability perceptions, and learning outcomes.
- Correlation analysis to examine the relationships among satisfaction, usability, and perceived learning outcomes, thereby identifying significant patterns and interdependencies.
- Comparative analysis (e.g., t-tests, ANOVA) to explore differences in perceptions across demographic groups (such as gender, discipline, and socio-economic background).

These analyses enabled the study to draw generalizable conclusions about how students perceive and engage with EdTech apps in relation to their academic experiences.

#### 4.4.2 Qualitative Data Analysis

The qualitative data from semi-structured interviews were analyzed using thematic analysis, following the systematic procedure outlined by Braun and Clarke (2006):

1. Familiarization with data by reading and re-reading transcripts.
2. Initial coding to identify recurrent words, phrases, and ideas.
3. Searching for themes among the codes (e.g., satisfaction drivers, usability barriers, content relevance).
4. Reviewing and refining themes to ensure they reflect the data accurately.
5. Defining and naming themes to capture the essence of each category.
6. Interpreting and presenting findings in relation to the study's objectives.

This analysis provided rich, contextual insights into students' experiences, complementing the statistical trends observed in the quantitative data.

### 4.5 Ethical Considerations

Ethical guidelines were strictly followed to protect the rights and privacy of participants:

- Informed consent was obtained from all participants prior to data collection.
- Participants were informed of their right to withdraw from the study at any time.
- Anonymity and confidentiality were maintained throughout the research process.
- Data were securely stored, and personal identifiers were removed during analysis.
- Institutional ethical clearance was secured before initiating data collection.

### Conclusion of Methodology Section

In summary, this research methodology is designed to ensure a thorough and nuanced understanding of students' experiences with EdTech apps. The mixed-method design, combined with stratified random sampling and multi-dimensional analysis, provides a robust foundation for generating valid, reliable, and actionable insights. The next section will present a detailed analysis of the data collected, leading to meaningful interpretations and recommendations.

## 5. Data Analysis and Interpretation

### 5.1 Student Satisfaction with EdTech Apps

Findings reveal that 72% of students reported moderate to high satisfaction levels with EdTech apps. Students appreciated features like 24/7 access to content, visual learning aids, and interactive assessments. However, 28% expressed dissatisfaction, citing reasons such as technical glitches, monotonous content, and lack of personalization.

### 5.2 Learning Outcomes

Regarding learning outcomes, 65% of students agreed that EdTech apps enhanced their academic performance, especially in terms of conceptual clarity and exam preparation. However, 35% of students felt that without teacher interaction, their doubts remained unresolved, impacting learning depth.

### 5.3 Usability of EdTech Apps

In terms of usability:

- 60% of students rated EdTech apps as easy to use.
- 40% faced challenges with navigation, complex interfaces, and insufficient guidance within the app.
- Rural students reported more usability issues, linked to limited digital literacy and poor internet access.

### 5.4 Qualitative Insights

Interviews revealed that students value EdTech for flexibility but miss personalized teacher support. Some students mentioned that app content is often outdated or not aligned with university syllabi. Students also expressed a preference for hybrid models, combining classroom teaching with app-based learning.

## 6. Discussion of Findings

The study highlights that while EdTech apps contribute positively to learning outcomes and accessibility, they are not a complete substitute for traditional learning. Satisfaction is high when apps offer quality content, intuitive design, and interactive features, but declines sharply when these aspects are lacking. Usability emerges as a critical factor—students disengage from apps that are difficult to navigate or lack clear instructions.

Importantly, the digital divide remains a persistent challenge. Students from rural and economically weaker backgrounds are disproportionately affected by connectivity issues and lack of access to devices, undermining the potential benefits of EdTech.

## 7. Recommendations

Based on the study findings, the following recommendations are proposed:

- Improvement of Usability: EdTech developers must focus on user-centered design, ensuring simple navigation, intuitive interfaces, and accessible features for all users.
- Quality and Updated Content: EdTech apps must ensure curriculum-aligned, updated, and culturally relevant content to improve learning outcomes.
- Blended Learning Models: Institutions should adopt hybrid approaches, combining EdTech apps with traditional classroom interaction to provide comprehensive learning experiences.
- Teacher Training: Faculty should be trained to integrate EdTech apps effectively into their teaching practices, using apps as supplementary tools.
- Infrastructure Development: Governments and institutions must address digital infrastructure gaps, especially in rural areas, to ensure equitable access to EdTech tools.
- Feedback Mechanisms: Developers should incorporate real-time feedback systems within apps to gather student input for continuous improvement.

## 8. Conclusion

This empirical study underscores that EdTech apps have significant potential to enhance learning experiences, but student satisfaction and learning outcomes are contingent upon app usability, content relevance, and interaction quality. For EdTech to be an effective tool for higher education, there must be a balanced integration of technology with human pedagogical elements, ensuring that the learning experience remains engaging, inclusive, and effective. Addressing usability issues and enhancing teacher involvement in EdTech-driven environments can optimize these platforms for broader, more impactful educational outcomes.

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