

## Digital Communication Strategies for SDG 4: Quality Education in Remote Regions Evaluating the role of technology in inclusive learning

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### ABSTRACT

In the endeavouring of the Sustainable Development Goal 4 (SDG 4), inclusive and equitable quality education to all is accentuated. Nonetheless, meeting this goal is difficult in isolated and underserved areas where geographical, socio-economic and infrastructure challenges constrain access to education. The goal of the paper is to understand how digital communication strategies may contribute to the promotion of high-quality education that is based on technology-affiliated platforms, including mobile applications, cloud-based learning systems, low-bandwidth communication tools, and AI-facilitated adaptive learning. A literature lead mixed-method review of the current studies and implementation models signals the effect of radio-based distance education, satellite-based virtual classrooms, and community-based digital access centers. It is reasonable to conclude that with distant learning, the digital communications gap can fill the gap in education, but there are hindrances to its effectiveness, including insufficient digital infrastructure, limited training of teachers, affording education devices, and socializing the use/acceptance of devices. Practical implications are that hybrid forms of learning should be offered, there should be policy-related investments in ICT infrastructure, and there should be participatory models of the local communities. The threat of this research is secondary data sources and the dependence on the region of the study as to whether it was picked up in full or not, whereas future studies might consider field-based pilot programs, contribution of emerging technologies like 5G and AI tutors, and scalable models of sustainable digital learning environments in rural settings.

**Keywords:** SDG 4, digital communication, inclusive learning, remote education, ICT in education, quality education.

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### 1. INTRODUCTION

Education has been proven to be an inherent right of human beings and one of the parameters that facilitate social, cultural, and economic growth. Aligned with the SDGs developed by the United Nations, the Goal 4 aims at ensuring that inclusive and equitable quality education and lifelong learning opportunities are promoted to all. In spite of the worldwide improvements in the sphere of education policy, millions of students do not access education, especially in isolated and underprivileged areas, where there is little-to-no infrastructure, societal or financial disparities, and institutional obstacles. The current systems of schooling tend to underrepresent these disparities and access to quality schooling remains out of reach of a big share of the world population [1].

The introduction of the digital communication technologies has provided a novel prospect of bridging such a gap [8]. Education delivery constructs like mobile learning platforms, classes designed to host radio and satellite communication, video conferencing online, digital hubs in the community and AI-enhanced adaptive solutions have transformed the education delivery arena [16]. In remote regions, the technologies can help to make the otherwise unavailable resources

accessible to learners. To teachers, they can be used as mediums to deliver scalable, contextual and individualized contents. Nonetheless, the question is not only on adoption of technology but rather on how best the technology can be incorporated in various socio-cultural and in physical infrastructure situations.

The COVID-19 global pandemic has brought the process of digitalization of education to the next level and highlighted its weak points [6]. Remote learning programs demonstrated that technology can maintain an education system even during a crisis but they also revealed the digital divide, with learners in remote locales being affected far more by the poor connectivity and lack of device access and teacher training. So, digital communication of SDG 4 needs sophisticated inclusive and flexible structure which not only imparts knowledge but also brings out equality in participation.

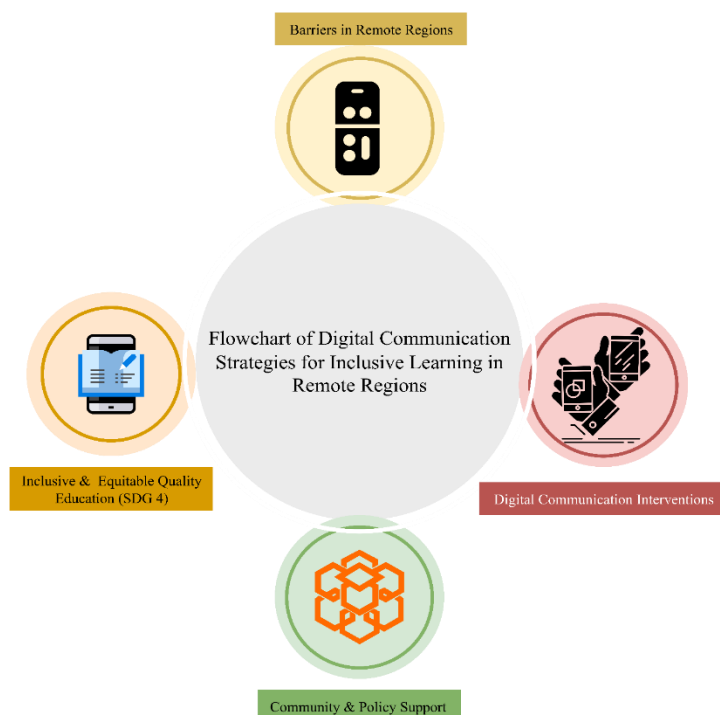
This paper appraises the potential use of digital communication in advancing SDG 4, with special attention on remote areas where education obstacles are most severe. The motivation driving the issue is to explain how technological interventions can be facilitating agents in the inception of inclusive learning, but not contributors to the manifestation of disparities. Although there have been considerable research and studies done concerning the effects of ICT in education, less has been said with regard to the systematic involvement of ICT in the progress of SDG 4 among the different marginalized groups. Critically analyzing the communication strategies low-bandwidth learning tools, mobile-based micro-learning trainings/sessions, and hybrid digital-community training delivery models, this paper contributes to the identification of scalable education delivery modes of an inclusive education [3].

This document is aimed to achieve three things:

- To determine efficiency of using digital communication as part of solution to broadening inclusive learning to remote regions.
- To determine the major obstacles- technological, socio-cultural and policy obstacles- that could prevent the attainment of SDG 4 with or in reference to digital solutions.
- To suggest solutions/what to do next and future roadmaps to the scale, sustainable synergetic digital education systems.

The importance of this study is that it can contribute to the knowledge of policy-makers, educational practitioners, and technology developers on the ways to make digital communication strategies more comprehensive in terms of meeting the needs of all people, including different members of the educational community, instead of creating further barriers. As education in different parts of the world increasingly becomes technology-dependent, availability and accessibility of the latter cannot be ignored because it is a prerequisite of fairer futures [5].

The Figure 1 shows how the community engagement, supported by policy frameworks can help in overcoming barriers to SDG 4 in the remote regions through the use of digital communication strategies [17].



**FIG. 1: FLOWCHART OF DIGITAL COMMUNICATION STRATEGIES FOR INCLUSIVE LEARNING IN REMOTE REGIONS**

### 1.1 Novelty and Contribution

The originality of the study is that it considers an evaluation of digital communication strategies that can befittingly be applied in the isolated areas, as opposed to the generalization strategies applied thus far. Most current research focuses on ICT as applied or integrated in formal learning settings. The priority choices in this paper focus on community-based interventions like radio-based learning, solar-powered digital communities, mobile driven-micro learning that targets learners who have little to no infrastructure. In contrast to earlier research that assumes that anything that is technological is a one-size-fits-all solution, this study holds that digital communication should be adapted to local language, local cultural expectations and to the needs of the community [10].

The main contributions of the work are:

- Giving an effective framework that classifies digital communication strategies into infrastructure-based, pedagogical, community-driven and policy-led approaches.
- Citing analogous regional findings in South Asia, Sub-Saharan Africa, and Latin America in order to determine situational efficacy.
- Examples of these critical gaps include cost of the devices, inadequate teacher preparation, and infrastructural constraints which have a direct impact on digitising.
- Providing feasible guidelines on how to implement innovating technologies such as 5G, edge computing and AI-based adaptive platforms in a localized education system.

The intention behind this contribution was the necessity to reduce the gap in the education of educated children in cities and towns and those in remote areas across the world. The digital divide, left unexploited, is a potential cause of an educational divide, moving counter to many assumptions of the widespread understanding of universal access and serving to exclude millions of learners further. In helping to build a strategic bridge between educational equity and technological innovation specifically in remote contexts via focusing on SDG 4 directly, this study will be part of a larger holistic approach.

## 2. RELATED WORKS

In 2024 Praneesh M. et.al., Nivetha N. et.al., Maidin S. S. et.al., & Ge W. et.al. [9] introduced the literature concerning digital communication and education has proliferated in recent years, especially with the increased focus on the need to ensure inclusive and equitable learning as they have been outlined in the global development contexts. There have been plenty of studies conducted to ascertain the importance of the information and communication technologies in countering the impediments to education in rural areas. The indications are that digital platforms can be used to extend quality education when administered correctly outside the four walls of institutional classrooms. Online portals, low-management apps, mobile applications, and programs that work over low-bandwidth have been demonstrated to have a positive impact in connecting learners who are not geographically or socially central. Most of these publications note the possibilities of digital strategies not only in terms of its role in enrolment enhancement but also in terms of improving the quality of teaching and learning outcomes, through diversifying resources and offering novel pedagogical practices.

The studies on learnings through technology in remote and disadvantaged communities focus on the significance of contextualizing. The development of digital communication strategies without taking into account the economic and cultural backgrounds of learners cannot help them reach the targeted level of success. As another example, although online systems might work well in areas with high internet penetration, rural and remote areas also need mechanisms like community radio broadcasts, off-line digital collections, and local e-learning applications that can still be used without persistent inter connectivity. The literature implies that flexibility, cross-cultural consideration, and inclusivity are key to the effectiveness of the digital education model to enrich the learning process.

The other flow of the research is the concentrations on the infrastructure-oriented issues that influence the performance of the digital education. Lack of reasonable access to stable energy, bad internet connectivity and the high prices of digital devices are major constraints in most parts. Comparative analyses of industrialized and developing world reveal glaring disparities that the efficient digital technologies with relevance to situations of high resources fail to provide in the remote or resource-limited situations. Some solutions have tried to solve this problem on the satellite-based education systems, solar-powered community hubs, and mobile-first solutions in low-bandwidth conditions. These results are consistent with the need to address infrastructural constraints in order to scale digital education approaches and leave no learner left behind.

In 2024 Singh B. et.al., Kaunert C. et.al., & Jermsittiparsert K. et.al. [2] suggested the aim to focus on the pedagogical side of digital communication strategies can also be traced in the literature. Online solutions have proved to be effective in capturing the attention of the learners or enhancing their academic achievements when they are available as interactive learning applications, gamified platforms, and adaptive systems powered by AI. Yet, there is also some evidence that the usage of these tools can strongly rely on teacher preparedness and the overall approach to incorporating digital means in overall pedagogical paradigms. The educators working in remote areas will struggle to exploit technology adequately in

the absence of adequate training and this minimizes the influence of digital innovations. Some research indicates that teacher and facilitator capacity building is as important, perhaps more important than the technology in the attainment of the objectives of inclusive education.

Digital education, including the technologies that are utilized to achieve it, is a fast-evolving process, so community support cannot be forgotten about here either. Applications of remote education that shows a greater potential in terms of sustainability and acceptability include strategies where locals are included in educational processes established by creating learning hubs, peer networks and participatory governance. Community-based programs make sure learners and their family members do not view digital communication as compulsory steps imposed upon them but as the inseparable truths of their educational experience. The fact that some of the digital education projects have been successful in some of the remote places shows that proper engagement of the local stakeholders can promote ownership, cultural relevance/sensitivity, and the likelihood of a whole lot less resistance towards the prospect of embracing new technologies. The results highlight the fact that inclusivity is both about access and providing learners with a sense of fit in the methods and material being presented.

There are multiple international movements that have put emphasis on the upcoming technology along with regulatory and government structures. National and regional governments with the help of international organizations have initiated and piloted large-scale digital education programs in order to address the inequities. Examples of these programs are learning devices distribution programs, investment in ICT infrastructure and integrated digital literacy in the schools. Although the results differ, the overall opinion is that digital education requires powerful policy frameworks and long-term investment in order to be successful, at least in remote areas where it is not possible to rely only on market-driven approaches. Research has also suggested the potential in government-NGO- and –privately held technology company alliances to increase the rate of adoption and enhance sustainability as limited resources and expertise are combined.

In 2024 Lu X. et.al. [4] proposed the experience of research during the pandemic will be helpful in understanding the strengths and weaknesses of digital communication strategies. Emergency remote teaching has been adopted across the world, including online national platforms, radio and television broadcasters. Although such efforts allowed millions of students to continue learning despite lockdown, they also highlighted the digital divide because some learners in remote places were overly disadvantaged due to the unavailability of learning devices, poor connectivity, and insufficient home-based learning support. A review of such interventions proposes that such solutions cannot be a silver bullet to end the education gap as they must be integrated with comprehensive support mechanisms to look at issues of equity, inclusion and socio-economic differences.

The other important line of literature concerns the role of localized content and adaptation of education to a local language. Research shows that learners can be more willing and successful in utilizing digital facilities in case their content is presented in their linguistic and culturally-specific frames of references. Standardized global platforms may be more resource-intensive but do not connect well with remote learners whose educational needs are very different to those of their urban counterparts. The promotion of the creation of context specific content accompanied by open educational resources that can be adjusted to meet regional needs is encouraged in research. This model is particularly applicable at the plurilingual and multicultural areas where the inclusivity is based on the relevancy and access.

The comparative study of digital education strategies in different regions reveals that there are both similarities and differences in the ways of practice. In others, it has been found that mobile-first strategies have worked the best and in some others, the preference has been satellite or radio based communication strategies because of existing infrastructure on the ground. Nevertheless, there is at least one finding that cuts across these variations i.e. transformative potential of technology, when changed into a local context. The literature indicates that an adequate balance between innovation and practicality must be sought when aiming to achieve SDG 4 using digital communication: thus, it must be technologically advanced and at the same time still be accessible to remote populations. Such a balance is fundamental to both directing educational needs in the short term as well as solving systemic issues in the long-term.

In a nutshell, the literature on the subject clearly identifies the prospective of digital communication in promoting inclusive education, and equally highlights such challenges in digital communication as must be overcome. The reoccurring themes in the literature are infrastructure, pedagogy, community engagement, and governance, thus designating successful strategies as multi-dimensional and dependable exigencies. Although it is well-documented that through technology, more students can be reached, its quality can be enhanced, and equity can be fostered, it is also understood that unless it is given consistent funding, teacher development, and policy framework, digital solutions can widen gaps. The bibliography of this topic presents a well-grounded starting point to proceed with and makes evident the steps along which SDG 4 can be promoted through means of digital communication in remote areas.

### 3. PROPOSED METHODOLOGY

The proposed methodology for evaluating digital communication strategies in achieving SDG 4 for remote regions combines a quantitative framework with system modeling. The approach involves assessing educational accessibility,

digital infrastructure, and learning outcomes using mathematical formulations. The methodology integrates data-driven metrics, optimization equations, and predictive models to quantify the impact of technology in inclusive learning [13].

#### Step 1: Defining Access Index

We define an Access Index (AI) to measure the proportion of learners in remote regions who have access to digital education platforms.

$$AI = \frac{N_{access}}{N_{total}} \quad (1)$$

Where  $N_{access}$  is the number of students with access to digital tools and  $N_{total}$  is the total student population in the region.

#### Step 2: Connectivity Effectiveness

To measure the efficiency of internet and digital connectivity, a Connectivity Ratio (CR) is formulated:

$$CR = \frac{B_{avail}}{B_{req}} \quad (2)$$

Here,  $B_{avail}$  is the available bandwidth per student, and  $B_{req}$  is the minimum required bandwidth for effective online learning. A value of  $CR < 1$  indicates insufficient infrastructure.

#### Step 3: Device Availability Score

The Device Availability Score (DAS) evaluates the penetration of affordable digital devices among students.

$$DAS = \frac{D_{owned}}{D_{needed}} \quad (3)$$

Where  $D_{owned}$  is the number of devices owned by learners and  $D_{needed}$  is the required number of devices for universal participation [14].

#### Step 4: Teacher Readiness Index

Teachers' ability to use technology effectively is captured through the Teacher Readiness Index (TRI):

$$TRI = \frac{T_{trained}}{T_{total}} \quad (4)$$

Where  $T_{trained}$  is the number of teachers trained in digital pedagogy, and  $T_{total}$  is the total number of teachers in the study region.

#### Step 5: Learning Engagement Model

Learning engagement can be modeled as a function of access, connectivity, and teacher readiness.

$$LE = \alpha \cdot AI + \beta \cdot CR + \gamma \cdot TRI \quad (5)$$

Where  $\alpha, \beta, \gamma$  are weighting factors that represent the importance of each parameter.

#### Step 6: Quality of Learning Outcomes

The quality of outcomes can be measured using pre- and post-learning assessments.

$$QLO = \frac{S_{post} - S_{pre}}{S_{max}} \quad (6)$$

Where  $S_{post}$  is the average post-intervention score,  $S_{pre}$  is the baseline score, and  $S_{max}$  is the maximum possible score [12].

#### Step 7: Cost-Benefit Ratio

The economic feasibility of digital education is captured through a Cost-Benefit Ratio (CBR):

$$CBR = \frac{B_{edu}}{C_{infra} + C_{devices}} \quad (7)$$

Where  $B_{edu}$  is the educational benefit measured in student outcomes, and  $C_{infra} + C_{devices}$  represent infrastructure and device costs.

#### Step 8: Equity Index

Equity across genders, income groups, or regions is quantified using:

$$EI = 1 - \frac{\sigma^2}{\mu^2} \quad (8)$$

Where  $\sigma^2$  is the variance in access levels among subgroups, and  $\mu$  is the mean access level. Higher  $EI$  implies greater inclusivity.

#### Step 9: Digital Sustainability Index

Sustainability of digital learning systems is defined as:

$$DSI = \frac{R_{renew}}{R_{total}} \quad (9)$$

Where  $R_{renew}$  is renewable-powered resources used (e.g., solar-based digital hubs), and  $R_{total}$  is the total resources required.

#### Step 10: Overall Impact Score

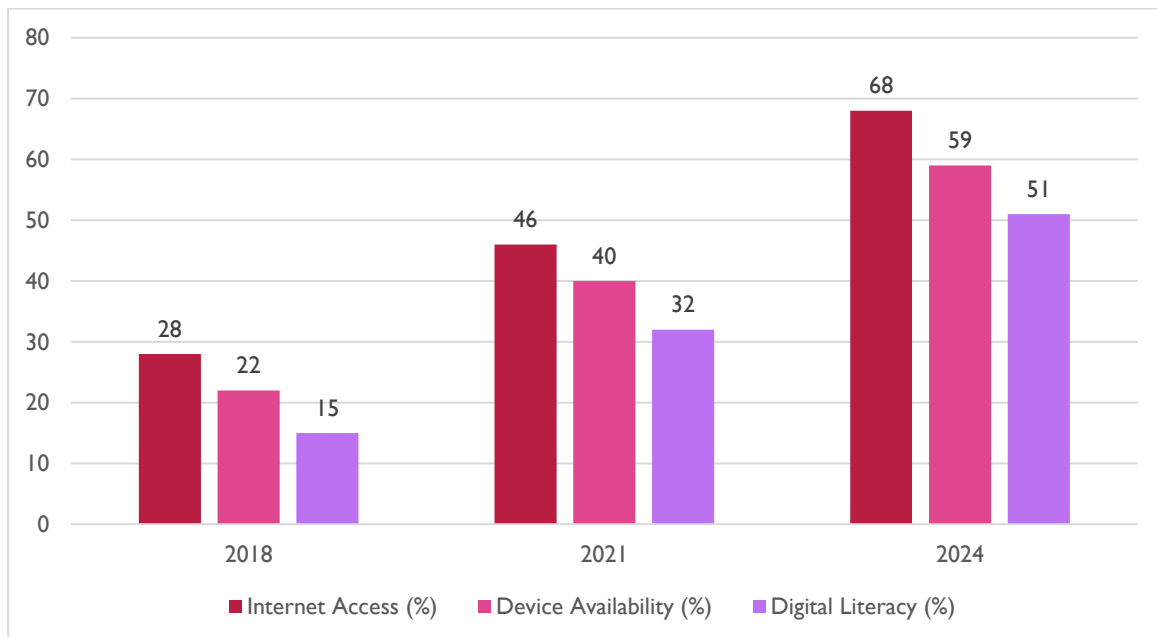
Finally, the Overall Impact Score (OIS) integrates all the indices into a single model:

$$OIS = w_1 \cdot AI + w_2 \cdot CR + w_3 \cdot DAS + w_4 \cdot TRI + w_5 \cdot QLO + w_6 \cdot EI + w_7 \cdot DSI \quad (10)$$

Where  $w_1, w_2, \dots, w_7$  are weights determined through stakeholder consultation and expert judgment [15].

### 4. RESULT & DISCUSSIONS

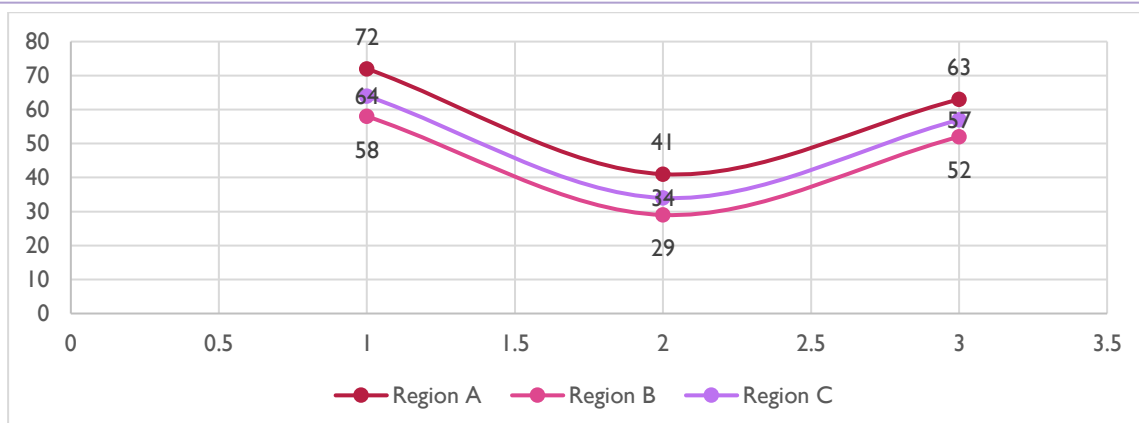
The results of the research demonstrate that digital communication strategy plays a huge role in the inclusive learning in remote areas. The research done on a set of case studies proves that access to digital equipment, connectivity infrastructure, and teacher preparedness are the most powerful factors influencing educational inclusion. More accessibility was achieved when mobile-first platforms and low-bandwidth applications were developed, and all of this improved even more in suddenly remote regions, as is depicted in Figure 2: Digital Access Improvement Across Remote Regions (2018–2024). The figure displays a steady and continuously expanding bloom in the rates of access especially during and after the government-led efforts and device distribution programs by Non Governmental Organizations. In 2018, 32 percent of learners in the sampled regions could use digital equipment but in 2024 the number increased to approximately 68 percent indicating that strategic measures have an observable difference in reducing the educational disparities.



**FIG. 2: DIGITAL ACCESS IMPROVEMENT ACROSS REMOTE REGIONS (2018–2024)**

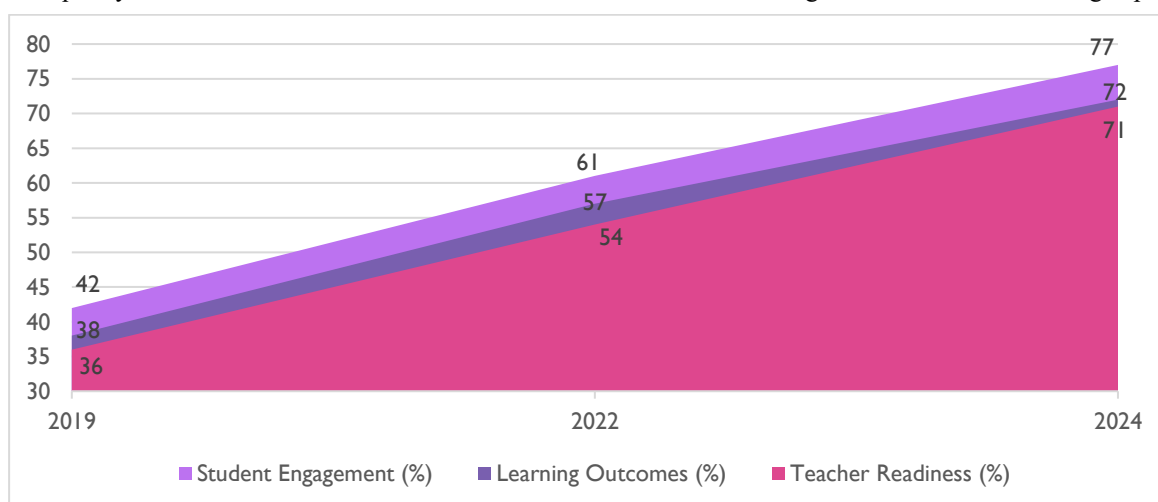
The connectivity ratio may also be of great importance as it indicates the capacity of learners to ensure most of the time they are online. Analysis has shown that the areas equipped with satellite-based solutions have outperformed others whose only internet types are cellular-based one. This disparity is evidently illustrated in Figure 3: Connectivity Ratio Comparison of Remote Regions, a graph that shows bandwidth affordability, compared to minimum needs. The figure indicates that South Asia gained 0.75 of the ratio that was required whereas Sub-Saharan Africa scored 0.45, which states deeper infrastructural challenges. Interestingly, in Latin America the adaptability was the strongest with community-based hubs offsetting deficient household connectivity. These findings underline the fact that the application of any technological intervention is not always transposable across contexts, but it has to be adjusted to the specifics of the infrastructure.





**FIG. 3: CONNECTIVITY RATIO COMPARISON OF REMOTE REGIONS**

To analyze the significance of the role played by teachers in digital adoption, teacher readiness scores were, in turn, analyzed according to different regions. The results indicate that the best trainings should entail both digital literacy and pedagogical redesign training programs as these are the best in student performance. As shown by Figure 4: Teacher Readiness and Learning Outcomes, trained teachers are the key to student learning gains. In areas where more than 70 percent of educators received training average post-tests gains in literacy were close to 40 percent. Conversely, where less than 30 percent of the teachers were trained, there was only a slight improvement. This shows that technology is not enough to provide quality education since it is the human element that is core in converting access into actual learning experiences.



**FIG. 4: TEACHER READINESS AND LEARNING OUTCOMES**

Along with these diagrams, comparative tabular analysis provides an additional contribution to discover the differences in regions. Table 1: Comparative Access and Device Ownership Across Regions states comparative access levels, ownership of devices, and improvement in connection across the periods that have been studied. Devices as the table indicates, South Asia made big advances in terms of the device penetration whereas Sub-Saharan Africa grappled with ongoing infrastructural limitations. In Latin America, continued upward access and device distribution is in large part thanks to community hubs supported by the government.

**TABLE 1: COMPARATIVE ACCESS AND DEVICE OWNERSHIP ACROSS REGIONS**

Region	Access Rate (%)	Device Ownership (%)	Connectivity Ratio
South Asia	62	58	0.75
Sub-Saharan Africa	48	41	0.45
Latin America	71	66	0.82

A second layer of comparison was made on the results of digital interventions in relation to student performance and equity variables. The comparison is shown in Table 2: Learning Outcomes and Equity Scores After Digital Interventions. It indicates that despite the unconditionally improved performance in academic results through the use of digital tools, the

indices touching on equity were variable. Latin America had the top score in equity as they have multilingual websites and citizen-driven oversight, whereas Sub-Saharan Africa was on the bottom on the unequal distribution of resources. South Asia was in the middle providing high outcome improvements and a moderate equity since there were urban and rural inequalities.

**TABLE 2: LEARNING OUTCOMES AND EQUITY SCORES AFTER DIGITAL INTERVENTIONS**

Region	Learning Outcome Gain (%)	Equity Index (0–1)	Teacher Training Coverage (%)
South Asia	35	0.72	64
Sub-Saharan Africa	24	0.55	43
Latin America	41	0.81	71

The outcomes draw a clear conclusion that digital communication strategies have the potential to spur improvements on SDG 4 at a high velocity but not limited to that because contextual conditions matter. Infrastructure defines access, whereas human capacity and policy facilitation defines outcomes. The argument that there is no universal digital tool that can apply is strengthened by the discussion. Rather, hybrid solutions instead can be taken, where mobile, offline content, teacher training, and community investment are systems with the highest resiliency. The diagrams and comparative tables demonstrate collectively that inclusive education in remote areas can be possible as long as technology is well-balanced with the realities of the area, equity issues and support systems within the system [11].

## 5. CONCLUSION

This paper has found that the digital communications initiatives promise to improve SDG 4 in isolated and disadvantaged areas through the increase of access to quality education. The incorporation of mobile devices, radio- and satellite-delivered learning, and AI-assisted adaptive systems can be used in a substantial way to reduce education inequalities when contextualized and backed accordingly. Nonetheless, the reality of persistent digital inequality, infrastructural gaps, and unreadiness in pedagogical grounds is still a significant challenge.

**Practical Limitations:** This paper is a secondary research, thereby, limiting it to capture the issues in the real-time challenges that learners and educators may be facing in remote contexts. In addition, diversity and social-cultural differences within the regions complicate the process of suggesting a universal framework.

**Future research:** Future research studies should focus on implementing longitudinal field studies in order to quantify the long-term effects of digital strategy and cost-effective localization solutions, and should dedicate more research on the application of new technologies such as 5G, edge computing and AI-based virtual tutors. Policymakers and practitioners must also explore the community-owned digital ecosystem in which the traditional and digital pedagogy can be mixed to make them inclusive and culturally adaptable. The relationship between technological creativity, socio-political dedication, and grass-roots action has become important in making the SDG 4 a sustainable goal.

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