

GEN Z LEARNING IN A DIGITAL WORLD

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Gen Zs are the first fully digital generation of students, mid-1990s to early 2010s. Therefore, the characteristics and approaches of these students toward studying have been quite different from their predecessors. They differ from other students in that they come with a fully new set of technological tools and resources that aid them in studies to make them more flexible, interconnected, and adept at multitasking.

Technology stands out as the most distinguished characteristic of Gen Z in its study habits. Students have found it much easier to gain access to any piece of information that they desire because of smartphones, tablets, and laptops. Such a wealth of information allows Gen Z to take charge of their education and often pursue self-directed learning (Cilliers & Flowerday, 2015).

Collaboration is something embodied by Gen Z in their habits of study. The social media and messaging apps, including WhatsApp, Messenger, and Telegram, help them study in groups and learn from each other through peer-to-peer methods (Wang & Wang, 2019). They may now upload their notes or even participate from anywhere in the world. Being connected fosters learning because it is more participative, less isolatory, and offers a greater opportunity for a supportive community. Most Gen Z students are also now members of online forums and study groups where they can post questions and insights and seek answers from another diverse peer group. And in such collaborative environments, active participation increases one's appreciation for the matter at hand.

Gen Z tends to prefer interactive and visual material. Traditional textbooks and lectures may not fully capture their attention, leading educators to adopt more dynamic

teaching methods. Interactive online tutorials, video lectures, and gamified learning platforms are the kind of preferences people have when studying, making the learning process engaging and effective. In addition, online platforms have interactive quizzes and flashcards to help students in memorizing facts in a fun and interactive manner. Fun learning through these applications certainly motivates a longer retention or understanding in students.

Raised in a fast-paced digital world, Gen Z is known for multitasking with perfection. They juggle school, extracurricular activities, and part-time employment while still doing reasonably well in their academics. However, this continuous multitasking makes them vulnerable to distraction and loss of focus. They seem more prone to value an ability to study at their own pace and in their own manner. This flexibility is exceptionally useful in uncertain times, particularly those like the move to online learning due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Generation Z's learning habits are distinctly digital-natured. How much technology they enjoy using and the fostered culture of collaboration, illustration of content, ability to multitask, and flexible adaptation all make them different from the past generations. More emphasis needs to be given to acknowledging and supporting these unique study habits to enable Gen Z students to successfully achieve their learning goals. By embracing their digital prowess and fostering an adaptable and interactive learning space, educators can help Gen Z children achieve their highest potential and prepare themselves for success in an ever-changing world.

References:

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