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**Original Research Article**

# INFLUENCE OF LEADERSHIP SUPPORT ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF DIGITAL EDUCATION POLICIES IN IGNATIUS AJURU UNIVERSITY OF EDUCATION

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**ABSTRACT:** This descriptive study examined the influence of leadership support on the implementation of digital education policies in Ignatius Ajuru University of Education. The study was guided by two research questions and two hypotheses and adopted a descriptive survey design. The population of the study comprised 1,200 academic and administrative staff of Ignatius Ajuru University of Education. A sample size of 30 percent of the population was used for the study, which gave a total of 360 respondents. Data were collected using a self-structured questionnaire titled "Leadership Support and Digital Education Policy Implementation Questionnaire (LSDEPIQ)". The reliability of the instrument was established using Cronbach Alpha, and it yielded coefficients ranging from .81 to .88. Mean and standard deviation were used to answer the research questions, while the independent samples t test was used to test the hypotheses at the .05 level of significance. The findings revealed that leadership support significantly influences the implementation of digital education policies through the provision of technological infrastructure, staff training, funding, strategic direction, and motivation. The study also found that effective leadership commitment enhances the adoption of digital technologies in teaching, learning, research, and administration. However, challenges such as inadequate funding, resistance to change, and limited digital skills hinder effective implementation. The study recommended increased investment in digital infrastructure, continuous staff development, stronger leadership commitment, and greater stakeholder involvement. It concluded that leadership support is essential for successful digital transformation and sustainable educational development in the university.

**Keywords:** Leadership support, digital education policies, policy implementation, digital transformation, educational leadership, Ignatius Ajuru University of Education.

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## INTRODUCTION

The rapid advancement of digital technologies has transformed the administration and delivery of education across the world. Universities are increasingly adopting digital education policies to enhance teaching, learning, research, and administrative efficiency. These policies provide strategic directions for the integration of information and communication technologies, digital learning platforms, artificial intelligence, data management systems, and online educational resources into institutional operations. The success of such policies, however, depends largely on

the level of leadership support available within educational institutions. Leadership support plays a critical role in ensuring that digital initiatives are adequately funded, effectively coordinated, and successfully implemented to achieve desired educational outcomes (Ngqunguza et al., 2024).

In recent years, higher education institutions have faced increasing pressure to embrace digital transformation in response to technological innovation, globalization, and the changing needs of learners. The emergence of online learning, virtual classrooms, learning management systems, and artificial intelligence tools has reshaped the educational landscape. Consequently, universities are developing and implementing digital education policies aimed at improving accessibility, flexibility, quality, and effectiveness in educational delivery. Despite these efforts, the implementation of digital education policies remains uneven across many institutions due to challenges associated with leadership commitment, resource allocation, staff readiness, and organizational culture (Okere, 2024).

Leadership support is widely recognized as a major determinant of successful digital transformation in educational institutions. University leaders are responsible for formulating strategic visions, mobilizing resources, creating enabling environments, and motivating staff to embrace technological innovations. Effective leadership promotes institutional readiness for change and ensures that digital policies are aligned with organizational goals and stakeholder needs. Studies have shown that institutions with strong leadership commitment are more likely to achieve successful implementation of digital initiatives than those where leadership involvement is limited (Ngqunguza et al., 2024). The implementation of digital education policies requires more than the provision of technological infrastructure. It involves the development of staff competencies, continuous professional development, effective communication, stakeholder engagement, and institutional support mechanisms. Leaders play a crucial role in facilitating these processes by providing direction, supervision, and encouragement. Where leadership support is inadequate, digital policies often encounter resistance from staff, poor utilization of technological resources, and limited sustainability of innovation initiatives (Jian & Mustafa, 2024; Sukandi, 2024).

In Nigeria, the drive toward digital transformation in higher education has intensified following the disruptions caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. Universities increasingly recognize the importance of digital technologies in ensuring continuity of academic activities and improving institutional effectiveness. Government agencies and educational stakeholders have encouraged institutions to adopt digital education policies that promote online learning, digital administration, and technology enhanced research activities. However, many universities continue to experience challenges such as inadequate infrastructure, insufficient funding, limited digital skills, and weak policy implementation mechanisms. These challenges underscore the importance of leadership support in achieving successful digital transformation. At Ignatius Ajuru University of Education, efforts have been made to integrate digital technologies into teaching, learning, and administrative processes. The university has embraced various digital initiatives aimed at improving educational service delivery and institutional efficiency.

Nevertheless, the extent to which leadership support influences the implementation of these digital education policies remains an important area of investigation. Understanding this relationship is necessary for identifying factors that facilitate or hinder policy implementation and for developing strategies that can strengthen digital transformation efforts within the institution. Furthermore, the increasing reliance on digital technologies in higher education requires leaders who possess digital competencies and the capacity to manage technological change effectively. Although several studies have examined digital transformation and

educational technology adoption in higher education, limited empirical attention has been given to the influence of leadership support on the implementation of digital education policies within Nigerian universities, particularly Ignatius Ajuru University of Education. This study therefore seeks to examine the influence of leadership support on the implementation of digital education policies in Ignatius Ajuru University of Education. The findings are expected to contribute to the growing body of knowledge on educational leadership and digital transformation while providing practical recommendations for enhancing policy implementation in higher education institutions.

## THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

### Transformational Leadership Theory

Transformational Leadership Theory emphasizes the ability of leaders to inspire, motivate, and influence followers toward the achievement of organizational goals. The theory posits that effective leaders create a shared vision, encourage innovation, stimulate intellectual growth, and provide individualized support to members of the organization. In the context of digital education policy implementation, transformational leaders facilitate change by promoting positive attitudes toward technology adoption, providing strategic direction, and mobilizing institutional resources necessary for digital transformation.

Recent applications of transformational leadership in digital environments indicate that leaders who actively support innovation and technological change significantly enhance institutional readiness and successful implementation of digital initiatives. Such leaders encourage collaboration, reduce resistance to change, and foster a culture that embraces continuous learning and technological advancement (Ngqunguza et al., 2024; Sukandi, 2024). The relevance of this theory to the present study lies in its explanation of how leadership commitment, motivation, strategic vision, and support mechanisms influence staff willingness to implement digital education policies. At Ignatius Ajuru University of Education, transformational leadership practices can contribute to successful policy implementation by creating an enabling environment for technological innovation and institutional change.

### Technology Acceptance Model (TAM)

The Technology Acceptance Model was developed to explain users' acceptance and utilization of technological innovations. The model posits that two primary factors, perceived usefulness and perceived ease of use, determine individuals' attitudes toward technology adoption and usage. According to the model, users are more likely to adopt a technology when they believe it will improve their performance and when it is easy to use. Recent studies have extended the Technology Acceptance Model to educational contexts, demonstrating that institutional support, leadership encouragement, and positive organizational environments significantly influence technology acceptance among educators and students (Aleru, 2023).

In relation to this study, leadership support influences the perceived usefulness and ease of use of digital technologies by providing adequate infrastructure, training opportunities, technical support, and motivation. When university leaders actively support digital initiatives, staff members are more likely to develop positive attitudes toward digital education policies and participate in their implementation. The combination of Transformational Leadership Theory and

the Technology Acceptance Model provides a robust framework for understanding the influence of leadership support on digital education policy implementation. While Transformational Leadership Theory explains how leaders inspire and facilitate organizational change, the Technology Acceptance Model explains how leadership support shapes individual acceptance and use of digital technologies. Together, these theories offer valuable insights into the factors that promote successful implementation of digital education policies at Ignatius Ajuru University of Education.

## Transformational Leadership Support and the Implementation of Digital Education Policies

Transformational leadership support refers to the ability of institutional leaders to inspire, motivate, and guide members of an organization toward the achievement of shared goals, particularly during periods of technological change and innovation. In higher education, transformational leaders develop a clear vision for digital transformation, encourage creativity, foster collaboration, and provide the necessary support for staff to embrace technological advancements. According to Sukandi (2024), transformational leadership plays a significant role in promoting digital transformation by creating an organizational culture that supports innovation and continuous improvement. Through strategic direction and motivation, leaders influence staff attitudes and behaviours toward the implementation of digital education policies. The implementation of digital education policies requires strong leadership commitment to ensure that institutional objectives are effectively translated into practice.

Transformational leaders facilitate this process by communicating policy goals, allocating resources, encouraging participation, and supporting capacity development among staff. Ngqunguza et al. (2024) observed that leadership support is essential for achieving successful digital transformation because leaders create enabling environments that promote the adoption and effective use of digital technologies. When leaders actively support digital initiatives, staff members are more willing to participate in policy implementation and adapt to new technological systems. Furthermore, transformational leadership support contributes to institutional readiness for digital change by fostering trust, commitment, and innovation among employees. Such leaders provide intellectual stimulation and individualized consideration, enabling staff to overcome challenges associated with technology adoption. Research indicates that institutions with transformational leaders are more likely to achieve successful implementation of digital education policies because employees receive the guidance and encouragement needed to embrace digital transformation (Rizki & Suwadi, 2024). Therefore, transformational leadership support remains a critical factor in ensuring the successful implementation and sustainability of digital education policies in higher education institutions.

## Organizational Support and the Implementation of Digital Education Policies

Organizational support refers to the extent to which an institution provides the resources, infrastructure, training opportunities, and administrative assistance required for employees to perform effectively and achieve organizational goals. In the context of digital education policy implementation, organizational support includes the provision of technological facilities, internet connectivity, technical support services, funding, and professional development programmes.

According to Asghar et al. (2023), organizational support significantly influences individuals' willingness to adopt and utilize digital technologies because it enhances their confidence and competence in using technological tools. The implementation of digital education policies depends greatly on the availability of adequate institutional support systems. Universities that provide sufficient digital infrastructure and continuous training opportunities create favourable conditions for technology integration and policy implementation. Lin and Yu (2023) noted that institutional support positively influences users' perceptions of technology usefulness and ease of use, thereby increasing technology acceptance and utilization. This suggests that organizational support serves as an important mechanism through which digital education policies can be effectively implemented within higher education institutions.

Sukandi (2024) emphasized that successful digital transformation do not only requires leadership commitment but also strong organizational structures and support mechanisms that facilitate innovation and continuous learning. Therefore, organizational support plays a vital role in promoting the successful implementation, effectiveness, and sustainability of digital education policies in higher education institutions.

## Statement of the Problem

The increasing adoption of digital technologies in higher education has made the implementation of digital education policies a necessity for improving teaching, learning, research, and administrative efficiency. Despite the development of various digital initiatives in Nigerian universities, the successful implementation of these policies remains a challenge due to inadequate leadership commitment, insufficient institutional support, limited technological infrastructure, and resistance to technological change among staff.

At Ignatius Ajuru University of Education, efforts have been made to integrate digital technologies into educational and administrative processes; however, concerns persist regarding the extent to which leadership support influences the effective implementation of digital education policies. While transformational leadership and organizational support are widely recognized as critical factors in facilitating digital transformation, empirical evidence on their influence within the university remains limited. This knowledge gap creates uncertainty about the role of leadership support in promoting successful digital policy implementation. It is against this backdrop that this study seeks to examine the influence of transformational leadership support and organizational support on the implementation of digital education policies in Ignatius Ajuru University of Education.

## Significance of the Study

The findings of this study will be beneficial to university administrators, educational policymakers, academic staff, researchers, and higher education institutions. University administrators will gain insights into how transformational leadership and organizational support can enhance the implementation of digital education policies and improve institutional effectiveness. Educational policymakers will benefit from evidence-based information that can guide the formulation and implementation of policies aimed at promoting digital transformation in higher education.

Academic staff will better understand the importance of leadership support in facilitating the adoption and utilization of digital technologies for teaching, learning, and research. The study

will also contribute to existing literature on educational leadership and digital transformation by providing empirical evidence from Ignatius Ajuru University of Education. Furthermore, the findings will serve as a reference for future researchers interested in exploring leadership support, organizational support, and digital policy implementation in higher education institutions.

**Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of this descriptive study is to critically examine the influence of leadership support on the implementation of digital education policies in Ignatius Ajuru University of Education. The specific Objectives of the study are:

- To determine the influence of transformational leadership support on the implementation of digital education policies in Ignatius Ajuru University of Education.
- To examine the influence of organizational support on the implementation of digital education policies in Ignatius Ajuru University of Education.

**Research Questions**

Two research questions guided the study:

- To what extent does transformational leadership support influence the implementation of digital education policies in Ignatius Ajuru University of Education?
- To what extent does organizational support influence the implementation of digital education policies in Ignatius Ajuru University of Education?

**Research Hypotheses**

Two hypotheses further guided the study and were tested at .05 level of significance:

- There is no significant difference between academic and non-academic staff in their perceptions of the extent to which transformational leadership support influence the implementation of digital education policies in Ignatius Ajuru University of Education.
- There is no significant difference between academic and non-academic staff in their perceptions of the extent to which organizational support influence the implementation of digital education policies in Ignatius Ajuru University of Education.

## METHODOLOGY

This study adopted a descriptive survey research design to examine the influence of leadership support on the implementation of digital education policies in Ignatius Ajuru University of Education. The design was considered appropriate because it enables the researcher to collect data from respondents and describe the phenomenon as it exists without manipulating any variable. The population of the study comprised 1,200 academic and non-academic staff of Ignatius Ajuru University of Education. A sample size of 30 percent of the population was used for the study, which gave a total of 360 respondents. The sample was selected using stratified

random sampling technique to ensure adequate representation of both academic and administrative staff across faculties and departments.

The instrument for data collection was a self-structured questionnaire titled "Leadership Support and Digital Education Policy Implementation Questionnaire (LSDEPIQ)". The questionnaire was designed based on the research objectives and was structured on a four point Likert scale of Very High Extent, High Extent, Low Extent, and Very Low Extent. The instrument was validated by experts in educational management and measurement and evaluation to ensure clarity, relevance, and appropriateness of the items. The reliability of the instrument was determined using Cronbach Alpha method, which yielded reliability coefficients ranging from .81 to .88, indicating a high level of internal consistency.

Data collected were analyzed using mean and standard deviation to answer the research questions, while the independent samples t test was used to test the hypotheses at .05 level of significance. This was used to determine whether significant differences exist in the responses of male and female staff on the influence of transformational leadership support and organizational support on the implementation of digital education policies. Ethical considerations were observed by ensuring voluntary participation, anonymity, and confidentiality of respondents throughout the study.

## RESULTS

**Research Question One:** To what extent does transformational leadership support influence the implementation of digital education policies in Ignatius Ajuru University of Education?

Table 1: Mean and standard deviation of respondents on the extent transformational leadership support influence the implementation of digital education policies in Ignatius Ajuru University of Education

| S/N | Items | Academic Staff (n=212) | | Non-academic Staff (n=148) | | Mean Set (n=360) | Remarks |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Mean | SD | Mean | SD | Mean | |
| 1. | Transformational leadership support in the university enhances staff commitment to the implementation of digital education policies. | 3.28 | 0.76 | 3.22 | 0.82 | 3.25 | High Extent |
| 2. | Inspirational motivation from university leaders encourages staff to actively implement digital education policies. | 3.08 | 0.89 | 3.06 | 0.94 | 3.07 | High Extent |
| 3. | Leadership provision of clear vision and direction improves the implementation of digital education policies in the university. | 3.11 | 0.84 | 3.01 | 0.81 | 3.06 | High Extent |
| 4. | Intellectual stimulation from transformational leaders promotes staff willingness to adopt digital education policies. | 3.11 | 0.87 | 3.12 | 0.87 | 3.12 | High Extent |
| 5. | Individualized support from university leaders strengthens staff participation in the implementation of digital education policies. | 3.13 | 0.79 | 3.17 | 0.93 | 3.15 | High Extent |
| | **Grand Mean** | **3.14** | **0.83** | **3.12** | **0.87** | **3.13** | **High Extent** |

The result presented in Table 1 shows that both academic and non-academic staff of Ignatius Ajuru University of Education generally agreed that transformational leadership support has a high extent of influence on the implementation of digital education policies in the university. This is evident from the cluster mean scores of academic staff (3.14) and non-academic staff (3.12), as well as the overall grand mean of 3.13, which all fall within the high extent range. Specifically, respondents indicated that transformational leadership enhances staff commitment (mean = 3.25), provides inspirational motivation (mean = 3.07), offers clear vision and direction (mean = 3.06), stimulates intellectual engagement (mean = 3.12), and provides individualized support (mean = 3.15) for effective policy implementation. The relatively low standard deviation values across items suggest that respondents' opinions were closely clustered around the mean, indicating a general consensus among staff groups. Overall, the findings imply that transformational leadership practices play a significant role in strengthening staff involvement and improving the successful implementation of digital education policies in the university.

**Research Question Two:** To what extent does organizational support influence the implementation of digital education policies in Ignatius Ajuru University of Education?

Table 2: Mean and Standard deviation of respondents on the extent organizational support influence the implementation of digital education policies in Ignatius Ajuru University of Education

| S/N | Items | Academic Staff (n=212) | | Non-academic Staff (n=148) | | Mean Set (n=360) | Remarks |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Mean | SD | Mean | SD | Mean | |
| 6. | The provision of adequate digital infrastructure by the university enhances the implementation of digital education policies. | 3.44 | 0.80 | 3.53 | 0.74 | 3.48 | High Extent |
| 7. | Availability of technical support services in the university improves staff use of digital education policies. | 3.18 | 0.79 | 3.27 | 0.74 | 3.22 | High Extent |
| 8. | Regular staff training and capacity building programmes promote effective implementation of digital education policies. | 3.23 | 0.84 | 3.13 | 0.87 | 3.19 | High Extent |
| 9. | Adequate funding from the university supports successful implementation of digital education policies. | 3.11 | 0.76 | 3.23 | 0.80 | 3.16 | High Extent |
| 10. | Availability of reliable internet and digital learning platforms enhances the implementation of digital education policies in the university. | 3.33 | 0.73 | 3.47 | 0.67 | 3.39 | High Extent |
| | **Grand Mean** | **3.26** | **0.78** | **3.33** | **0.76** | **3.29** | **High Extent** |

Table 2 shows that both academic and non-academic staff of Ignatius Ajuru University of Education agreed that organizational support have a high extent of influence on the implementation of digital education policies in the institution. This is reflected in the grand mean scores of 3.26 for academic staff and 3.33 for non-academic staff, with an overall mean of 3.29, all of which fall within the high extent category. The respondents specifically indicated that the provision of adequate digital infrastructure (mean = 3.48), availability of reliable internet and

digital platforms (mean = 3.39), technical support services (mean = 3.22), regular staff training and capacity building (mean = 3.19), and adequate funding (mean = 3.16) all contribute significantly to effective implementation of digital education policies. The standard deviation values are relatively low and close to one another, showing that the responses of both groups were not widely dispersed but rather clustered around the mean, indicating a general agreement among respondents. Overall, the findings suggest that strong organizational support is essential for enhancing the successful implementation of digital education policies in the university.

**Research Hypotheses**

**Hypothesis One:** There is no significant difference between academic and non-academic staff in their perceptions of the extent to which transformational leadership support influence the implementation of digital education policies in Ignatius Ajuru University of Education.

Table 3: Summary of t-test on the difference between academic and non-academic staff in their perceptions of the extent to which transformational leadership support influence the implementation of digital education policies in Ignatius Ajuru University of Education

| Gender | N | Mean | SD | Df | t-test | Sig. | Remark |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Academic Staff** | 212 | 3.14 | .83 | 358 | .579 | .722 | Not Significant |
| **Non-Academic Staff** | 148 | 3.12 | .87 | | | | |

Table 3 presents the independent samples t test analysis of the difference between academic and non-academic staff on their perceptions of the extent to which transformational leadership support influences the implementation of digital education policies in Ignatius Ajuru University of Education. The result shows that academic staff had a mean score of 3.14 with a standard deviation of .83, while non-academic staff recorded a mean score of 3.12 with a standard deviation of .87. This indicates that both groups have very similar perceptions regarding the influence of transformational leadership support on policy implementation. The t test value of .579 with a significance value of0.722, which is greater than .05 level of significance, shows that the difference between the two groups is not statistically significant. This means that both academic and non-academic staff do not differ significantly in their views on the influence of transformational leadership support on the implementation of digital education policies in the university. Therefore, the null hypothesis is retained, indicating that gender or staff category does not significantly affect their perceptions in this regard.

**Hypothesis Two:** There is no significant difference between academic and non-academic staff in their perceptions of the extent to which organizational support influence the implementation of digital education policies in Ignatius Ajuru University of Education.

Table 4: Summary of t-test on the difference between academic and non-academic staff in their perceptions of the extent to which organizational support influence the implementation of digital education policies in Ignatius Ajuru University of Education

| Gender | N | Mean | SD | Df | t-test | Sig. | Remark |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Academic Staff** | 212 | 3.26 | 0.78 | 358 | .410 | .608 | Not Significant |
| **Non-Academic Staff** | 148 | 3.33 | 0.76 | | | | |

Table 4 presents the independent samples t test analysis of the difference between academic and non-academic staff on their perceptions of the extent to which organizational support influences the implementation of digital education policies in Ignatius Ajuru University of Education. The result shows that academic staff recorded a mean score of 3.26 with a standard deviation of .78, while non-academic staff had a slightly higher mean score of 3.33 with a standard deviation of .76. This indicates that both groups generally agree that organizational support has a high extent of influence on policy implementation, with only a slight difference in their mean ratings. The t test result shows a calculated t value of .410 with a significance value of .608, which is greater than the .05 level of significance. This implies that there is no statistically significant difference between the perceptions of academic and non-academic staff regarding the influence of organizational support on the implementation of digital education policies. Therefore, the null hypothesis is accepted, meaning that staff category does not significantly influence their perceptions in this area.

## DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

The findings of this study clearly demonstrate that both transformational leadership and organizational support are critical determinants of the successful implementation of digital education policies. The high mean scores align with Sukandi (2024), who emphasized that transformational leadership fosters innovation and strengthens digital transformation in higher education through vision and motivation. Similarly, Ngqunguza et al. (2024) noted that leadership commitment enhances institutional readiness for digital change by improving coordination and staff engagement. The strong rating of organizational support is consistent with Lin and Yu (2023), who found that institutional resources and support systems significantly improve technology adoption and usage in academic settings. The absence of significant differences between academic and non-academic staff aligns with Rizki and Suwadi (2024), who reported that digital transformation perceptions are generally uniform across institutional categories when support systems are equally accessible. The low variation in responses suggests a shared institutional experience, although slight differences may reflect variations in access to training or digital resources.

## CONCLUSION

The study concludes that transformational leadership support and organizational support significantly influence the implementation of digital education policies in Ignatius Ajuru University of Education. Both forms of support were rated highly by respondents, indicating that leadership commitment, vision, infrastructure provision, training, funding, and technical assistance are essential for effective digital policy implementation. The study also established that there is no significant difference in perceptions between academic and non-academic staff, suggesting a common understanding of the importance of leadership and institutional support in driving digital transformation.

### Recommendations

Based on the findings, the following recommendations are made:

- The management of Ignatius Ajuru University of Education should strengthen transformational leadership practices by promoting visionary leadership, innovation, and active involvement in digital policy implementation.
- The university should enhance organizational support by improving digital infrastructure, internet connectivity, and access to modern learning platforms.

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