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## Generation X Instructors and Digital Competency: A Higher Education Perspective

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### ABSTRACT

*In the rapidly evolving realm of higher education, the integration of digital technology into teaching has become essential. This study seeks to assess the digital technology competencies and related challenges encountered by Generation X instructors at Pangasinan. A total of 183 instructors, selected by purposive sampling, participated in both in-person and online surveys. Descriptive statistics and categorization means were used to analyze the data. Competency levels were evaluated across all areas based on the DigCom Framework: information and literacy skills, communication and interaction skills, production skills, safety skills, and problem-solving and innovation skills. The results indicated that instructors exhibit competence in all domains. Further, a positive link was identified between skill levels and characteristics such as age, civil status, teaching experience, and training attended. In contrast, negative relationships were identified with educational attainment, academic rank, income, and length of service; however, no significant correlation was observed with sex. Challenges encountered by the instructors include excessive workload, inadequate internet connectivity, and the ever-changing expectations and preferences of students. A capability enhancement program is suggested to improve instructor competence.*

**Keywords:** - *information and literacy skills, communication and interaction skills, production skills, safety skills, and problem-solving and innovation skills*

### INTRODUCTION

The 21st century is witnessing a transformation in higher education due to digital innovation, technology integration, and a growing desire for flexible, learner-centered pedagogies. The digital transformation has been expedited by worldwide issues, notably the pandemic, which compelled educational institutions to quickly put in online learning systems and redesign instructional delivery (Dhawan, 2020). In this changing academic landscape, instructors from different generational backgrounds must effectively manage a diverse range of digital tools and strategies to maintain instructional efficacy and student involvement.

The current situation necessitates enhanced competitiveness and a full curriculum and method revamp. As such, the instructors recognize that this requires a distinct skill set that differs from traditional in-person tactics. They also use digital technologies to give students vital materials. Faculty need specific human traits to meet the demands of their job, which is called teacher competency. Successful instructors comprehend activities and instructional methods that help learners build conceptual comprehension. Teaching quality and student academic performance can be improved by teacher competency (Fauth et al., 2019).

The competency-based approach expanded at the advent of the 21<sup>st</sup> century in connection with way the of modernizing education. Clearly defining and expressing the

necessary skills and abilities is essential for restructuring higher education in order to align with students' interests and accommodate their professional and personal requirements (Brauer, 2021). Possessing skills in areas, namely learning and innovation skills, life and career skills, and information, media and technology skills may help a person become valuable and desirable in the workplace (Indeed, 2023). With the expansion of ICT and United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization's (UNESCO) goals, more individuals are using digital or e-Learning. Technology has improved education by revolutionizing teaching and learning (Dutta and Nessa, 2022). Technology improvements will make it possible for a big change in the future of education toward visual learning methods.

Digital competence has emerged as a crucial skill for instructors to promote active learning, integrate various digital resources, and connect efficiently with students in online environments. Multiple factors affect the improvement of digital competence. Institutional infrastructure, resource accessibility, and professional development opportunities are essential external elements. Internally, self-efficacy, motivation to learn, and perceived significance of digital tools substantially influence adoption. Instructors who acknowledge the practical advantages of utilizing learning management systems or collaboration tools are more inclined to incorporate them into their instruction. The DigComp framework for a customized evaluation of these competencies, directing the development of training programs that address actual requirements.

Additionally, DigComp was published in 2013 as a reference framework to help Europeans achieve digital competence. This highlights the skills that today's citizens need to confidently, critically, collaboratively, and creatively use digital technology to fulfill employment, learning, leisure, inclusion, and participation goals in our digital society. DigComp is developed by the European Commission's Joint Research Centre (JRC) for all UNESCO members. The framework emphasizes information and data literacy skills, communication and collaboration skills, digital content creation skills, safety skills, and problem-solving skills (UNESCO, 2023).

Generation X instructors, born between 1965 and 1980, hold a unique status within the academic field. Numerous individuals occupy roles as department chairs, program coordinators, or senior academics, rendering their digital competency not only a personal advantage but an essential requirement for institutional development.

Generation X instructors, despite their extensive expertise, are frequently digital immigrants—individuals who encountered technology later in life (Shofiana et al. 2024). Their digital preparedness significantly differs based on factors such as previous exposure, institutional support, and personal motivation. Consequently, focused initiatives to evaluate and enhance digital competency within this age group are essential for closing the generational digital divide in university. They, possessing decades of expertise and grounded in conventional instructional methods, frequently find themselves in a dilemma between the digital competency of their younger counterparts and the swiftly evolving demands of digitally savvy students according to UNESCO (2021).

One of the obstacles encountered by Generation X instructors in the current educational landscape were centered around effectively utilizing technological devices and mobile applications to meet the diverse needs and expectations of their students. An investigation by Alomari (2023) in determining the competencies in the field of education during the pandemic

revealed that faculty's ability to use e-learning effectively in online learning is poor and there are deficiencies in digital readiness at all educational levels. The faculty's personal knowledge, professional abilities, and competences may also not be adequate for the entirety of their pedagogical career.

While some colleges and universities have modified or expanded their curriculum to meet the growing demand for digital know-how, instructors still struggle and experience a heightened sense of responsibility in their roles as educators and researchers. There is also a concern regarding the potential impact of stagnation as it is related to the quality of university education (Blaskova, 2014). Due to the skills needed to teach online and the roles and responsibilities of faculty in distance learning, they may have limited awareness regarding the integration of the digital environment in their teaching practices and feel nervous about teaching online courses (Alomari, 2023).

Further, there is a lack of digital skills among faculty in European universities, especially when it comes to evaluating their own teaching. It was uncovered that instructors experienced a sense of being swamped and ill-equipped to employ online or remote instructional approaches. They encountered difficulties in adjusting their teaching methods to address issues such as students' unreliable internet connectivity, evolving personal requirements, and ambiguous or fluctuating educational or governmental guidelines (Basilotta-Gómez-Pablos et al., 2022).

In addition, Generation X instructors expressed difficulties in using MS Excel, Powerpoint, video programs, PDF, graphic designs and coding in a computer environment because of lack of hardware, difficulties in following the technology and using smartboards, preparing programs and animations. Instructors may also worry about privacy and data security because more and more personal information is being stored digitally, and social media is so popular (Norton, 2021). They are more likely to share private information on social media, which makes them easy to trick. It is also harder for them to spot phishing attacks on social media before it's too late because they have little knowledge about these platforms (Fortra Terranova Security, 2023).

Insufficient digital skills constantly emerge as the primary obstacle for faculty to properly utilize technology for education, regardless of a country's level of development (UNESCO, 2021). Specifically, faculty have not been given assistance and chances to enhance their ICT and pedagogical skills that are necessary. For example, in Thailand and Singapore, nearly all faculty had fundamental digital abilities. However, in countries like Kyrgyzstan, Malaysia, and the Philippines, less than 5 percent of faculty members reported having the same level of digital skills.

Ballano et al. (2022) emphasized that the challenges faced during the pandemic include insufficient logistical assistance for instructors and students, such as unreliable internet connection and limited access to digital devices and instructional tools. Additionally, there is a need to boost institutional support for information communication technology (ICT) infrastructure at colleges and universities, as well as provide instructors with training in ICT to improve their pedagogical digital competence and attitude towards online and long-distance learning. Rosales (2021) said that administrators must also be aware of the current availability of resources that the institution can provide.

Further, one problem is that Technical Livelihood Education (TLE) faculty in Nueva Ecija is that they are not proficient in the use of information and communication technology (ICT) in teaching (Zabala and Adelante, 2018). Correspondingly, Batan et al. (2022) stated that faculty have a basic level of skill in showing what they know and can do in information and data management, as well as knowing how to use the internet, network applications, and resources effectively.

Undoubtedly, the pandemic in the Philippines has served as a transformative catalyst for the incorporation of technology for several reasons. The causes encompass the revelation of inadequate usage of education technology before the pandemic, as well as the accelerated acceptance and implementation of practical educational technology applications in schools and universities across the country. The sudden emergence of a pandemic and the subsequent difficulties and vulnerabilities it exposed should motivate the country to use technology in the realm of education. Education stakeholders have made efforts to incorporate technology into education, although the extent of these efforts vary. The variation in education technology implementation is influenced by various factors, including the endorsement of education technology by influential leaders and education stakeholders, the presence of adequate infrastructure and devices, the proficiency of key individuals involved in education technology (such as instructors, school personnel, and technical specialists), and their willingness to embrace the use of technology in education (Espinosa et al., 2023; Chao and Pe Symaco, 2021).

### **Statement of the Problem**

This research study aims to assess the digital competencies of Generation X instructors in higher education institutions/

Specifically, it seeks to answer the following questions:

1. What is the current level of digital competence among Generation X instructors in higher education institution?
2. Is there a relationship between profile and their digital competence?
3. What are the challenges encountered by Generation X instructors?

### **Scope and Delimitations**

This study was conducted to assess the competency level of Generation X instructors in teaching higher education courses in Pangasinan. The respondents were instructors teaching in higher education belonging to Generation X whose age ranges from 45 to 60 years old. The inclusion criteria of the respondents are the following: a. must be born within the years 1965 to 1980, b. must have taught in higher education institution with a minimum of one (1) year, and c. with a minimum rank of Instructor I.

### **Review of Related Literatures**

The rapid digital revolution in higher education has highlighted the need for instructors to develop digital competencies to improve teaching efficiency, foster student involvement, and adjust to changing educational demands. Spante et al. (2022) indicate that a considerable

number of university instructors exhibit merely fundamental digital competency, with established frameworks such as the European Commission's DigComp (2013) commonly employed to evaluate and enhance digital skills development. The DigComp framework delineates five principal competence domains—information and data literacy, communication and collaboration, digital content production, safety, and problem-solving—functioning as a complete framework for assessing digital competencies in educational settings.

DigComp (2013) is extensively utilized to evaluate and facilitate the enhancement of digital competencies. The DigComp framework delineates five principal competence domains – information and data literacy, communication and collaboration, digital content production, safety, and problem-solving—functioning as a comprehensive framework for assessing digital competencies in educational contexts.

Information and data literacy encompasses the capacity to identify, locate, retrieve, store, organize, and critically and ethically assess digital information. Research conducted by Spante et al. (2022) and Ferrari (2013) indicates that although the majority of instructors excel in information retrieval, numerous individuals continue to have challenges in assessing data reliability and utilizing academic digital databases efficiently.

The effective utilization of digital tools for professional communication and online collaboration is crucial for modern learning environments. Redecker (2017) indicates that instructors are gradually utilizing tools such as email, LMS discussion boards, and video conferencing. Generational differences influence accessibility and frequency, with younger instructors engaging more actively with collaborative tools than their older peers (Villalba-Condori et al., 2021).

Production skills involve the creation, modification, and dissemination of digital material, such as presentations, infographics, and online course modules. Studies indicate that instructors frequently depend on fundamental technologies such as PowerPoint or Word, whereas more sophisticated content generation methods (e.g., interactive media or Open Educational Resources) are largely underutilized (Rashid et al., 2022).

Safety includes the safeguarding of personal data, the administration of digital identity, and the assurance of cybersecurity. Although institutions offer general recommendations, the understanding and implementation of digital safety policies among instructors differ significantly. Research conducted by Gudmundsdottir & Hatlevik (2018) indicates that instructors often place educational tasks over cybersecurity considerations.

Problem-solving and innovation skills involve recognizing digital requirements, resolving technological problems, and adjusting to innovative digital contexts. Studies demonstrate that digital natives exhibit higher levels of trust in using new tools and addressing technological challenges, whereas digital immigrants frequently depend on IT support or coworkers (Tondeur et al., 2017).

Despite these problems, Generation X instructors occupy essential leadership and mentorship positions throughout university. Their empowerment via specialized digital skills training is essential for both personal development and institutional advancement, as well as for enhancing educational quality. Research by Ab Rashid et al. (2022) emphasizes the strong connection between instructors' digital competence and student learning results, highlighting

the necessity for ongoing professional development. Additionally, the DigCompEdu framework (European Commission, 2017) enhances DigComp by especially focusing on the digital pedagogical competencies necessary for instructors, facilitating the efficient incorporation of technology into teaching and learning methodologies.

This research underscores the increasing significance of digital competence in higher education, although it also highlights a distinct inadequacy in catering to the specific demands and experiences of Generation X instructors. This study addresses the gap by employing the DigComp framework to evaluate and empower Generation X instructors, assuring their preparedness to succeed in digitally enriched learning environments.

### Theoretical Framework

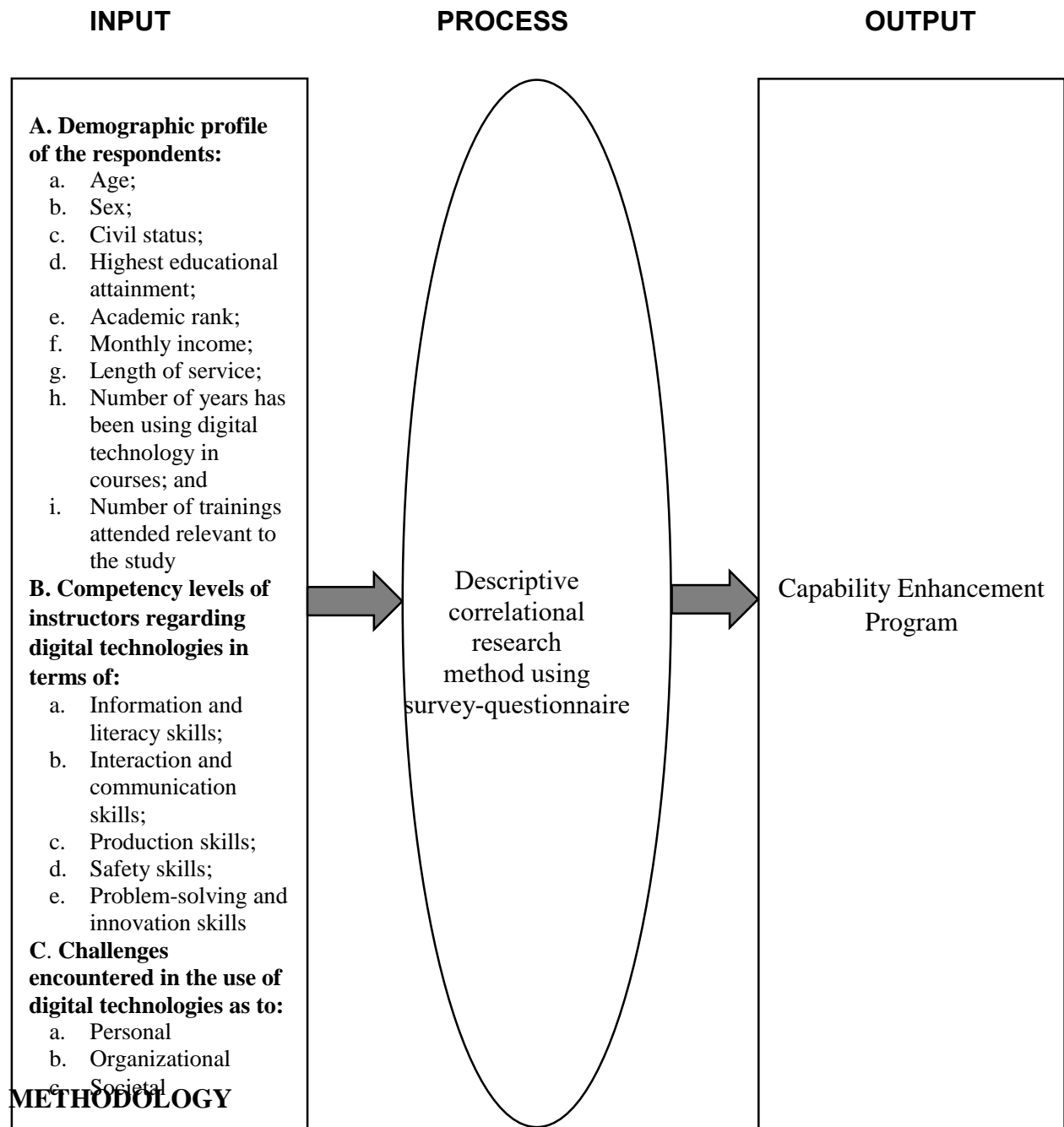
The **DigComp Framework**, served several functions, encompassing the development of competence assessment instruments, the design of training programs and resources, and the identification of digital profiles of training programs and resources, and the identification of digital profiles relevant to professional contexts within employment, education, training, and social inclusion. Additionally, DigComp serves as a tool for the advancement and evaluation of digital competence. Competences encompass a synthesis of knowledge, skills, and attitudes. Specifically, they consist of conceptual understanding and factual knowledge, descriptions of practical abilities such as process execution, and the cultivation of appropriate mindsets and dispositions for action. To have digital competence means to be able to utilize digital technologies with self-assurance, critical thinking, and responsibility while also engaging with them to further one's education, one's career, and one's participation in society. It includes information and data literacy, communication and collaboration, media literacy, digital content creation (including programming), safety (including digital well-being and competences related to cybersecurity), intellectual property related questions, problem-solving and critical thinking as stated by Council Recommendation on Key Competences for Life-long Learning in 2018 (Vuorikari, R., Kluzer, S. and Punie, Y., 2022).

**Bawane and Spector's Model of Eight Competency Behavior** explains the professional, educational, evaluator, social, administrative, technological, advisor/counselor, and researcher functions of teachers in online education, this model was utilized as a starting point. Within each of these roles, there are a few smaller occupations that collectively meet all the responsibilities. They consider being an instructional designer, the author of a course, a subject matter expert, a tutor, an organizer, a facilitator, and a professional to be secondary positions within the pedagogical function.

### Conceptual Framework

The input on the first box contained the profile of the respondents (age, sex, civil status, highest educational attainment, academic rank, monthly income, length of service, years has been using digital technology in the courses, and trainings attended relevant to the study). Likewise, the second box comprised of parameters on the level of competency (information and literacy skills, communication skills, production skills, safety skills, and problem solving and innovation skills). Further, the third box was composed of the challenges encountered in the use of digital technologies as to: personal, organizational and societal. For the process, it

contained the design (descriptive correlational) and the data gathering tool used. Lastly, for the output, this study proposed a capability enhancement program which aims to improve or sustain the competency level of the instructors in higher education institutions.



This research study assessed the digital competency of Generation X instructors in Higher Education institutions in Pangasinan.

### Research Design

The research employed a quantitative research method through descriptive correlation design. It is descriptive in nature since the researcher determined the demographic of the respondents, determined the competency level of the Generation X instructors in teaching

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higher education courses and their challenges encountered. It also assessed the relationship between the profile of the respondents and their level of competency along with the information and literacy skills, communication skills, production skills, safety skills, problem solving and innovation skills.

### **Research Steps**

This research began with a comprehensive literature review to establish a thorough understanding of the digital competencies of higher education instructors. This involved examining previous studies, and theoretical frameworks. Following a comprehensive review of the current literature, the research design was carefully formulated to align with the objectives of the study. This research included data collection methods, including an online survey questionnaire and in-person administration, directed at instructors from higher education institutions.

### **Data Collection and Sample Selection**

The data collection tool that was used in this study is a survey questionnaire. The survey instrument employed in this research is self-administered and custom-designed. The survey instrument employed in this research was adapted from various sources and was subjected to content validation. Specifically, the Digital Competence (DigComp) Framework of the European Commission served as the foundation for the questionnaire. The questionnaire was administered to the Generation X instructors at higher education institutions through purposive sampling.

### **Data Analysis Methods**

Descriptive statistics, including frequency counts, weighted means, and linear regression analysis, were employed in the study's analysis. The survey responses from the participants were analyzed using categorical treatment.

### **Study Limitations and ethical considerations**

The study adhered to ethical guidelines by obtaining informed consent from all participants, ensuring anonymity and confidentiality in accordance with data privacy act, and allowing participants the option to withdraw from the research at any time.

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

Most of the Generation X faculty members at Pangasinan State University are female, married, and within the age range of 43 to 47 years old. They typically hold doctorate degrees and have an academic rank of Assistant Professor IV, with a monthly income ranging from ₱36,619 to ₱46,725. These faculty members have rendered 21 to 25 years of service, have been using digital technology for 11 to 20 years, and have attended fewer than 5 to as many as 16 to 20 training courses relevant to the study.

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### *Level of Digital Competency of Generation X Instructors*

The faculty in Higher Education Institution are competent with the use of digital technologies. Safety skills gained the highest mean of followed by interaction and communication skills, information and literacy skills, problem-solving and innovation skills, and production skills.

In terms of information and literacy skills, it is observed that the faculty are competent with an average total weighted average of 2.90. Self-service has the highest mean, followed by critical evaluation, storage and sharing and search. This means that in terms of information and literacy skills, Generation X can manage personal data in online platforms without the help of others while they have the lowest ability to utilize information using search engines, filters, and open educational resources.

The result is congruent to the findings of the study of Vishnu et al. (2022) found that postgraduate and doctoral students have a satisfactory level of competence in most of the aspects of digital competence. In addition, Zhao et al. (2021) mentioned that faculty have a basic level of digital competence. In a local context, the study conducted by Batan et al. (2022) confirms that faculty members possess a fundamental competency in comprehending and proficiently utilizing internet and network applications and resources. Bucad and Galicia (2021) demonstrated that individuals possess a high degree of confidence in their digital literacy skills.

In terms of interaction and communication skills, Generation X instructors showed high competency on social awareness, media choice, collaboration and active participation as the lowest. They are able to choose the most appropriate media platforms based on their needs but are not so active in participating via professional and social networking.

This implies that the degree to which a teacher performs their responsibilities is strongly impacted by the level of their communication skills. The literature and studies evaluation indicated that a faculty's job cannot be just to teach, but also to adapt lessons to different learning styles, keep students motivated, build relationships with them through kindness and support, keep the classroom running smoothly, and give helpful comments. To do all of these things, you need to be able to communicate clearly (Hanifan, 2022). Further, according to the National University (2023), educators are required to exhibit great communication skills and the capacity to actively connect with persons from varied backgrounds in order to effectively carry out their professional obligations. However, the research of Martin et al. (2020) stated that faculty rated social media as the lowest in terms of competency.

On production skills, the respondents are competent in terms of evaluation of digital content, followed by automation, digital exploration and lastly, production and sharing. This shows that faculty can collaborate and elicit opinions and responses online however find lacking in creating output using various applications and variety of software.

The findings are related to the study of Martin et al. (2020) affirmed that faculty rated the use of learning management system as the highest in terms of importance and competence. Further, the research of Gayeta (2021) mentioned that there is a high degree of proficiency shown by a faculty computer skill list indicates that using technology and training materials will raise the standard of higher education. Faculty acknowledge their limited or moderate level

of digital proficiency, along with the lack of specific abilities, particularly those pertaining to the evaluation of educational methodologies. Thus, teachers need to learn how to effectively use digital media in their lessons, which will make the digitization of their teaching methods easier. This means that teachers plan how to use media in their lessons, use digital media in a useful and suitable way, and explore new digital formats and methods (Wurffel and Baliuk, 2023).

In terms of safety skills, instructors possess the necessary skills to assess safety through the utilization of digital technology. Online behavior has the highest competency as to safety skills; however, data protection has the lowest competency of all sub-indicators. The faculty can demonstrate appropriate online behavior and recognize unlawful actions while not so competent is keeping their accounts protected.

The findings of this study are comparable with the results reported by Escobar (2021) showed that the respondents exhibit a high degree of beneficial cybersecurity behaviors across five dimensions: Malware, Password Usage, Online Scam Phishing, and Social Engineering. Additionally, it is mentioned in the study of Bojukrapan et al. (2023) stated that digital competencies for higher education faculty consists of competencies which includes ethical behavior, morality and technological safety. This involves interactions with fellow faculty, school personnel, and community members. The research by Fouad (2021) showed that the repeated and growing number of cyberattacks on universities is proof that normal, everyday cybersecurity risks can cause a sense of urgency and can have more negative effects than just the problems they cause right away.

Lastly, on problem-solving and innovation skills, continuous learning gained the highest competency, followed by innovation and development and configuration as the last. This goes to show that faculty members are engaging themselves in activities related to the use of digital technologies. On the contrary, they are not well-versed in troubleshooting technological problems.

The current study is anchored on the study of Bojukrapan et al. (2023) stated that faculty competencies include solving problems and using digital technology and organizing virtual environments. Furthermore, it was reported in the study of Batan et al. (2022) mentioned that faculty reported being proficient in demonstrating knowledge and skills in basic computer operation and other information devices, including basic troubleshooting and maintenance and the use of office and teaching productivity tools. On the other hand, Tokovska et al.'s research from 2022 found that both the survey and the lecturers' personal stories gave information about three things: (1) The return of motivational factors; (2) The possible improvement of digital competencies; and (3) Making innovation easier in higher education.

### ***Relationship of Profile and Digital Competence***

The number of years and ages have a weak positive relationship with the competency level of the faculty members belonging to Generation X whereas the number of trainings attended relevant to the study and civil status have a strong positive relationship. On the other hand, academic rank and income have a very weak negative relationship whilst the highest educational attainment has strong negative correlation. Further, sex has no correlation.

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## *Challenges Encountered*

The Generation X instructors oftentimes faced several challenges pertaining to personal, organizational, and societal dimensions. The primary obstacle in the personal domain pertains to an overwhelming workload, while the organizational dimension involves the issue of slow internet access. Additionally, the social dimension encompasses the transformation of students' expectations and preferences.

As to personal aspect, encountered obstacles were consistent with the findings of Oludayo et al. (2018) which indicate that an excessive workload has a negative impact on both the commitment and quality of teaching. Polly et al. (2020) also agreed that time constraints is also a challenge. Taylor and Frechette (2022) emphasized that educators encountered a moderate degree of burnout. This burnout was found to be caused by the demands of research and teaching responsibilities, as well as interactions with students. The study of Hammoudi Halat et al. (2023) observed a high incidence of anxiety, sadness, stress, and burnout among faculty members across different academic domains and throughout the whole academic hierarchy

The problems relating to organizational aspect are connected to the study of Alhubaishy and Alljuhani's (2021) stated that an educational institution faces problems with the availability of required resources. The study of Mhlanga (2022) also noted in his study that lack infrastructure and weak capital, and technology ecosystems are challenges associated with digital inclusion. According to Marasigan (2023) of Business Mirror, absence of an open access policy for internet connectivity remains a barrier. Further, Timotheou et al., (2023) highlighted that in the digital transformation process by the institution, connectivity, infrastructure, and government support as well as administration and data management practices are interconnected and play a vital role.

In societal context, Kaputa et al. (2022) highlighted that digital transformation enhances some of the most in-demand abilities in the new knowledge society, such as text manipulation, digital communication and sociability, and information seeking and processing. Similarly, it plays a significant part in cutting down on education-related expenses, but it also deteriorates interpersonal communication skills. According to Marasigan (2023) of Business Mirror, there is a lack of radio spectrum for new services especially that mobile technology continues to advance, hence, legal, and regulatory frameworks should be updated to keep up with the demands of time. Eom and Lee (2022) stated that as governments strive to address these crises, digital transformation is not a choice but an imperative.

## **SUMMARY**

The rapid technological changes affected the Generation X faculty, especially when it comes to learning new important skills and competencies, since the group grew up with personal computers are used to traditional teaching methods and face-to-face interactions. They are used to using old-fashioned methods instead of modern ones that fit the needs of today. Because of this, it is important to look at their digital skills and the difficulties they face when teaching academic courses at higher education institutions.

The study determined the demographic profile of Generation X instructors in terms of age, sex, civil status, highest educational attainment, academic rank, monthly income, length

of service, number of years has been using digital technology and number of trainings attended relevant to the study. The competency of faculty was determined in terms of information and literacy skills, interaction and communication skills, production skills, safety skills, and problem-solving and innovation skills. Moreover, the challenges encountered via personal, organizational, and societal were identified. The output of the study is the capability enhancement program which can be proposed to enhance the competency level and address the challenges encountered by the Generation X faculty teaching higher education courses.

The research employed a quantitative methodology, specifically utilizing a descriptive correlation design, and was carried out across Pangasinan. The researchers utilized a purposive selection technique to select a total of 183 faculty members from Generation X. The respondents were provided with a survey-questionnaire using both face-to-face interactions and online platforms using Google Form. The obtained data was then evaluated using suitable statistical methods.

## CONCLUSIONS

The instructors demonstrated competence in the use of digital technology, particularly in the areas of information and literacy skills, interaction and communication skills, production skills, safety skills, and problem-solving and innovation skills. Furthermore, findings showed that age, civil status, number of years courses are taught, and the number of trainings attended are positively correlated with their level of digital competency. Despite these strengths, the faculty often encounter challenges such as excessive workload, slow internet connectivity, and the constantly evolving expectations and preferences of students.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings and conclusions of the study, the following recommendations are suggested:

To further support the professional growth of faculty members at Pangasinan, it is proposed that a Capability Enhancement Program be implemented and included in the institution's faculty development plan to improve their digital competencies and address the specific challenges they encounter in higher education instruction. The activities are domain-specific which includes any of the following: series of training-workshops, collaborative learning, classroom/faculty observation, online courses and modules, research projects. Interactive lecture and peer review activities. One of the key objectives of the program is to develop the digital competencies of Generation X instructors, elevating them from competent to highly competent levels through targeted training and continuous professional development. Finally, the study may be further enhanced by integrating additional variables, expanding the scope across campuses, or applying longitudinal data to deepen the analysis and generate more comprehensive insights.

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