

## Digital Twin driven classrooms: A case study of an AI-augmented conceptual framework for adaptive learning

Arish Ibrahim<sup>a\*</sup>

<sup>a</sup>Abu Dhabi Vocational Education and Training Institute, Abu Dhabi,  
United Arab Emirates

\*arishibrahim@outlook.com

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### Abstract

The rapid expansion of digital education has improved access to learning but has also revealed persistent limitations related to personalization, real-time adaptability, scalability, and learner engagement. Many existing digital learning platforms and AI-based tools operate as isolated solutions, offering limited integration and treating learners as passive recipients of instruction. To address these challenges, this paper proposes a conceptual framework for AI-augmented Digital Twin classrooms (AIDTC) that reconceptualizes the classroom as an intelligent cyber-physical learning system. The framework was developed through a structured synthesis of interdisciplinary literature spanning Digital Twin theory, cyber-physical systems, artificial intelligence in education, and immersive learning. Drawing on advances in digital engineering and Industry 4.0/5.0 principles, the framework integrates Digital Twin modeling, artificial intelligence, immersive learning technologies, and human-in-the-loop orchestration within a layered architecture. Continuous synchronization between learner interactions and dynamic digital representations enables proactive instructional adaptation based on real-time behavioral, cognitive, and contextual data. The proposed architecture comprises four interconnected layers perception, cognition, immersion, and orchestration supporting data capture, intelligent reasoning, immersive learning delivery, and transparent pedagogical control. The study adopts a conceptual framework development approach supported by a single case study to demonstrate how the framework can be applied in a higher-education setting. While empirical generalization is beyond the scope of this work, the case demonstrates the internal coherence, feasibility, and applicability of the proposed framework. Overall, the AIDTC framework offers a future-ready blueprint for developing intelligent, ethical, and learner-centered digital classrooms that extend beyond conventional online and hybrid learning paradigms.

**Keywords:** Digital Twin, AI in education, Immersive learning, Cyber-physical systems, Smart classrooms, Digital education architecture.

### Introduction

In recent years, the global education sector has undergone a rapid transformation fuelled by the accelerated adoption of digital technologies. The COVID-19 pandemic served as a major inflection point, catalysing the shift from traditional in-person classrooms to remote, hybrid, and technology-enabled learning environments. However, this rapid digital migration has also exposed fundamental limitations in the current ecosystem of digital education. While platforms such as Learning Management Systems (LMS), video conferencing tools, and Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs) have enabled broader access, they often fail to provide personalization, real-time responsiveness, and deep engagement (Al-Fraihat et al., 2018, Picciano, 2017). In most cases, these platforms treat learners as passive consumers rather than active participants in an adaptive, data-driven educational system.

The next frontier in educational innovation demands more than digitizing content it requires reimagining the classroom as an intelligent, cyber-physical system. This is where the emerging paradigm of Digital Twin technology, widely applied in industries such as aerospace, manufacturing, and healthcare, offers profound potential. A Digital Twin is a virtual replica of a physical entity that synchronizes in real-time with its counterpart using sensor data, analytics, and simulations. In engineering contexts, Digital Twins enable predictive maintenance, performance optimization, and scenario-based testing (Tao et al., 2019a). When translated to education, this concept opens the possibility of creating real-time, dynamic representations of learners and classrooms allowing instruction to adapt continuously based on behavior, performance, and engagement signals (Rasheed et al., 2021).

Complementing this is the rise of artificial intelligence (AI), particularly in domains such as intelligent tutoring systems, learning analytics, and

adaptive assessment. AI can provide scalable decision-making, detect patterns across vast learner datasets, and support timely feedback loops (Baker, 2009). However, most current applications of AI in education operate as standalone tools rather than integrated components of a holistic, intelligent system. By integrating AI with Digital Twin models and immersive interfaces, we can construct learning environments that not only reflect the learner's cognitive and behavioural states but also act on them intelligently adjusting content, pacing, collaboration, and instructional strategies in real time (Pinkwart, 2016).

Despite significant advances in artificial intelligence in education, prior research has largely focused on standalone intelligent tutoring systems, adaptive assessments, or learning analytics dashboards that operate as isolated solutions. While these approaches have demonstrated localized benefits, they often lack integration with immersive learning environments and do not support continuous synchronization between learner behavior, intelligent reasoning, and instructional adaptation. Similarly, immersive learning technologies are frequently deployed as independent interventions rather than as components of an integrated, data-driven learning architecture. As a result, there remains a clear research gap in the form of a cohesive, system-level framework that integrates artificial intelligence, Digital Twin modelling, immersive learning, and human-in-the-loop orchestration within a unified cyber-physical classroom environment.

This paper introduces the AI-Augmented Digital Twin Classroom (AIDTC) as a conceptual framework that unifies these technologies into a multi-layered, cyber-physical learning environment. The AIDTC envisions the classroom as a smart system with four core layers: perception, cognition, immersion, and orchestration. Through this architecture, a learner's real-time interactions captured through behavioural logs, affective cues, and performance data are processed by AI models that dynamically update the learner's Digital Twin. This twin, in turn, informs personalized instructional flows delivered through immersive virtual environments such as 3D classrooms or metaverse platforms (Dede & Richards, 2022). Instructors interact with the system through orchestration dashboards, receiving recommendations for pedagogical strategies, learner grouping, and adaptive interventions.

Framing the classroom as a Digital Twin system enables a shift from reactive to proactive pedagogy, where learning pathways are not just designed in advance but evolve as learning unfolds. This aligns closely with the principles of Industry 4.0 and 5.0, where real-time data integration, system interoperability, and human-machine collaboration are central to innovation (Hecklau et al., 2016). Furthermore, this paradigm supports the goals of Education 5.0, which emphasizes human-centric

learning, ethics, personalization, and digital empowerment (Magruk, 2019).

The purpose of this conceptual paper is not to present empirical results, but to offer a transdisciplinary framework that bridges educational theory, digital engineering, and AI-enabled design. It articulates the foundational components, theoretical assumptions, and architectural layout of an intelligent Digital Twin classroom and outlines strategic implications for future implementation. The AIDTC model serves as a blueprint for researchers, educational institutions, and edtech developers seeking to create resilient, scalable, and transformative digital learning experiences that extend far beyond conventional online instruction. Accordingly, this study adopts a single case study approach to demonstrate the practical application of the proposed framework within a real higher-education learning context.

This study is positioned as the development of a theory-driven conceptual framework for AI-Augmented Digital Twin Classrooms, rather than a review paper or an empirical evaluation study. The framework is derived through a structured synthesis of interdisciplinary theoretical literature and is supported by a single descriptive case study to illustrate its practical applicability in an authentic educational context. The case study is intended to demonstrate framework operationalization rather than to provide statistical validation of learning outcomes.

## Literature review

The proposed AI-Augmented Digital Twin Classroom (AIDTC) framework is grounded in multiple complementary theoretical foundations spanning adaptive learning, artificial intelligence in education, immersive learning, and Digital Twin modelling. These theories collectively inform the structure, functionality, and pedagogical logic of the framework.

Adaptive learning theory provides a foundational basis for personalizing instructional pathways based on learner behavior, performance, and engagement. Learning management systems and early adaptive platforms demonstrated the potential for differentiated instruction but were largely limited to rule-based adaptation and post-hoc feedback (Al-Fraihat et al., 2018; Romero & Ventura, 2020). Contemporary adaptive learning models emphasize continuous monitoring, real-time feedback, and dynamic adjustment of instructional strategies, highlighting the need for architectures capable of closing the feedback loop between learner data and pedagogical action.

Artificial intelligence in education (AIED) extends adaptive learning by enabling automated reasoning, pattern recognition, and predictive modelling. Intelligent Tutoring Systems represent a key theoretical lineage within AIED, demonstrating how

learner models can be used to deliver individualized feedback and scaffolding (VanLehn, 2011). However, many AIED implementations remain narrowly scoped, operating as standalone systems without integration into immersive environments or broader learning ecosystems. This limitation underscores the need for system-level frameworks that embed AI-driven reasoning within integrated instructional architectures.

Immersive learning theory further informs the AIDTC framework by emphasizing experiential, situated, and collaborative learning. Virtual and augmented reality environments have been shown to enhance engagement, conceptual understanding, and skill acquisition, particularly in engineering and professional education contexts (Radianti et al., 2020). From a theoretical perspective, immersive learning aligns with constructivist and experiential learning models, which stress active knowledge construction through interaction. However, immersive technologies are often implemented as isolated interventions rather than as adaptive components within data-driven instructional systems.

Digital Twin theory provides the unifying systems-level foundation for integrating adaptive learning, AI reasoning, and immersive environments. Originating in digital engineering, Digital Twins enable continuous synchronization between physical entities and their virtual representations using real-time data, analytics, and simulation (Tao et al., 2019b). In educational contexts, learner Digital Twins extend this concept by modelling cognitive, behaviour, and engagement-related learner states over time (Rasheed et al., 2021). Unlike static learner profiles, Digital Twins support continuous updating, prediction, and scenario-based instructional adaptation.

Recent conceptual models have explored Digital Twin applications in smart classrooms, demonstrating the feasibility of learner modelling and adaptive content delivery (Rasheed et al., 2022). However, existing approaches often lack a comprehensive architecture that integrates AI reasoning, immersive learning delivery, and human-in-the-loop instructional control. The AIDTC framework builds on these theoretical foundations by embedding Digital Twin principles within a layered cyber-physical architecture that supports continuous data capture, intelligent interpretation, immersive experience delivery, and transparent pedagogical orchestration.

By synthesizing these theoretical perspectives, the AIDTC framework addresses a critical gap in current educational research: the absence of an integrated, theory-driven conceptual framework capable of unifying adaptive learning, artificial intelligence, immersive environments, and Digital Twin modelling within a single coherent system.

## Framework development

The AI-Augmented Digital Twin Classroom (AIDTC) framework was developed using a theory-driven conceptual design approach that integrates established principles from Digital Twin theory, cyber-physical systems, artificial intelligence in education, and constructivist learning theory. The primary objective of the framework is to address limitations in existing digital learning systems, particularly their lack of real-time adaptability, system-level integration, and learner-centric personalization.

The foundational theoretical concept underpinning the framework is Digital Twin theory, originally developed in industrial and engineering domains. A Digital Twin is defined as a dynamic virtual representation of a physical entity that is continuously synchronized using real-time data (Tao et al., 2019; Tao et al., 2020). In manufacturing and smart systems, Digital Twins enable monitoring, prediction, and optimization through closed feedback loops. In the educational context, this concept is extended to represent learners and learning environments as evolving digital entities that reflect cognitive, behavioral, and contextual states (Rasheed et al., 2021). This extension enables continuous learner modelling rather than static profiling.

The second theoretical pillar is cyber-physical systems (CPS) theory, which emphasizes tight integration between physical processes, computation, and control through feedback mechanisms (Lee, 2008). CPS principles inform the framework's closed-loop architecture, where learner interactions in physical or digital spaces generate data that are processed by intelligent systems and translated into adaptive instructional responses. This approach aligns with system-of-systems thinking widely adopted in Industry 4.0 and smart infrastructure research (Boyes et al., 2018).

From a pedagogical perspective, the framework draws on constructivist and learner-centered learning theories, which emphasize active knowledge construction, experiential learning, and continuous feedback (Picciano, 2017). These theories justify the integration of immersive learning environments and adaptive instructional pathways, ensuring that technological intelligence supports meaningful learning rather than automated content delivery.

The integration of these theoretical concepts resulted in a layered framework architecture designed to balance system modularity with continuous interaction. The framework consists of four interconnected layers: perception, cognition, immersion, and orchestration. The perception layer is responsible for capturing learner interaction data, such as engagement patterns, assessment performance, and participation metrics, from both physical and digital learning environments. The cognition layer applies artificial intelligence and learning analytics techniques to interpret these data

and dynamically update the learner's Digital Twin. This Digital Twin functions as a semantic and behavioral representation of the learner, supporting predictive insights and personalization (Rasheed et al., 2022).

Insights generated by the cognition layer inform the immersion layer, where adaptive learning experiences are delivered through virtual classrooms, simulations, or collaborative digital spaces. Immersive technologies support experiential and skills-based learning, which has been shown to enhance engagement and knowledge retention when properly aligned with instructional goals (Radianti et al., 2020). Oversight is provided by the orchestration layer, which enables human-in-the-loop decision-making. This layer ensures that instructors retain pedagogical control while benefiting from AI-generated insights, addressing ethical and transparency concerns associated with automated educational systems (Mittelstadt et al., 2020; Woolf, 2020).

Methodologically, the framework was established using a conceptual design research methodology rather than empirical hypothesis testing. First, an interdisciplinary literature review was conducted to identify limitations in existing learning management systems, intelligent tutoring systems, and AI-driven educational tools, particularly their fragmented and reactive nature (Al-Fraihat et al., 2018; Holmes et al., 2019). Second, core constructs from Digital Twin and CPS literature were abstracted and mapped to educational processes. Third, iterative refinement was applied to ensure theoretical coherence, scalability, and pedagogical relevance. An illustrative case study was then used to demonstrate operational feasibility and clarify inter-layer interactions, consistent with prior conceptual framework development studies.

Regarding data considerations, the framework is designed to utilize commonly available educational data streams, including time-on-task, assessment outcomes, interaction logs, and collaboration indicators. These data are conceptually modelled to show how they inform learner Digital Twins and adaptive instructional decisions. No empirical data analysis is conducted in this study, as the focus is on architectural design and conceptual validation rather than outcome measurement. This approach aligns with prior conceptual work in AI-enabled learning architectures and Digital Twin-based systems (Rasheed et al., 2021; Tao et al., 2020). Overall, the AIDTC framework provides a theoretically grounded and methodologically structured blueprint for intelligent, adaptive, and human-centered digital classrooms, offering a foundation for future empirical validation and system implementation.

### Literature synthesis approach

The development of the AIDTC framework was informed by a structured conceptual synthesis of prior literature rather than a full systematic review. Relevant studies were identified through targeted

searches of peer-reviewed journals and conference proceedings focusing on Digital Twin models, cyber-physical systems, artificial intelligence in education, adaptive learning, and immersive learning environments. Seminal and recent works were selected based on their theoretical relevance, citation influence, and contribution to system-level educational design.

The synthesis process followed three analytical stages. First, key theoretical constructs and functional principles were extracted from the selected literature, including learner modelling, feedback loops, intelligent adaptation, immersive interaction, and human-in-the-loop control. Second, these constructs were grouped thematically and analyzed for conceptual overlap and complementarities across domains. Third, the synthesized themes were translated into architectural components and interactions, resulting in the four-layer AIDTC framework comprising perception, cognition, immersion, and orchestration.

This transparent conceptual synthesis approach ensured theoretical coherence and traceability between prior research and the proposed framework, while avoiding the constraints of domain-specific empirical aggregation. Although a PRISMA-style systematic review was not conducted, the synthesis followed a systematic and theory-driven process appropriate for conceptual framework development.

### AI-augmented Digital Twin classrooms (AIDTC) framework

The AI-Augmented Digital Twin Classroom (AIDTC) framework conceptualizes the classroom as a layered cyber-physical learning system in which physical learner activity, artificial intelligence, immersive environments, and human instructional oversight are continuously integrated through a closed feedback loop. Rather than treating digital tools as isolated instructional aids, the framework redefines the classroom as an intelligent system that senses learner behavior, reasons over learning states, simulates instructional responses, and orchestrates adaptive interventions in real time. This systems-oriented perspective is grounded in cyber-physical systems theory, Digital Twin modelling, intelligent orchestration, and constructivist learning principles, enabling scalable, personalized, and responsive education.

At the foundation of the framework lies the physical learning environment, where learners interact with instructional content, peers, and tools using digital devices or immersive interfaces. These interactions generate continuous streams of behavioral, cognitive, and contextual data that serve as real-world inputs to the system. Consistent with cyber-physical systems design, the classroom is treated as a tightly coupled physical-digital entity in which sensing, computation, and actuation operate in a continuous loop, enabling real-time responsiveness

and adaptive control (Lee, 2008). Similar feedback-driven architectures are widely adopted in industrial Internet of Things ecosystems to support intelligent system behavior and performance optimization (Boyes et al., 2018).

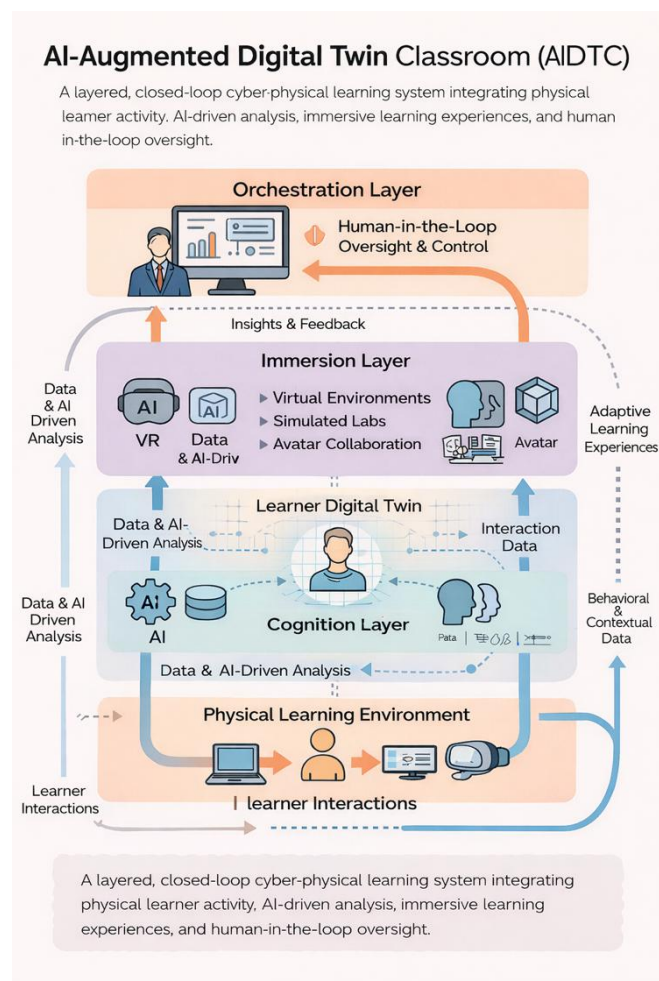
Data originating from the physical learning environment are processed within the system's cognitive intelligence core, where artificial intelligence models analyze learner engagement, progression patterns, and potential learning difficulties. These analyses are used to construct and continuously update a learner Digital Twin, defined as a dynamic semantic and behavioral representation of the learner rather than a static profile. Drawing on Digital Twin theory, this virtual representation evolves through ongoing synchronization with real-world learner activity, enabling predictive analytics, scenario simulation, and proactive instructional decision-making (Tao et al., 2020). The Digital Twin thus functions as the central mechanism through which personalization, adaptation, and learning pathway optimization are achieved.

Insights derived from the learner's Digital Twin are translated into adaptive instructional experiences through immersive learning environments, including virtual classrooms, simulated laboratories, and collaborative three-dimensional spaces. These environments support constructivist learning by enabling exploration, interaction, and experiential knowledge construction within low-risk digital settings. As learners engage within these environments, new interaction data are continuously generated and fed back into the system, ensuring sustained synchronization between the physical learner and the Digital Twin.

Oversight and coordination are provided through an intelligent orchestration layer that bridges human and machine decision-making. This layer delivers real-time dashboards, alerts, and pedagogical recommendations to instructors while preserving human agency through explainable and human-in-the-loop AI mechanisms. Emphasizing transparency, accountability, and ethical alignment, orchestration ensures that artificial intelligence augments rather than replaces educator judgment, addressing key concerns related to explainability and trust in AI-driven systems (Mittelstadt et al., 2020).

The integrated operation of these components forms a closed-loop cyber-physical architecture in which sensing, cognition, immersion, and orchestration continuously inform one another. The overall structure and data flows of the AIDTC framework are illustrated in Figure 1, highlighting how real-time learner interactions drive Digital Twin updates, adaptive immersive learning experiences, and instructor-guided interventions. By framing the classroom as an AI-augmented Digital Twin system, AIDTC advances beyond conventional online and hybrid models, enabling a shift from reactive

instruction to proactive, learner-centric pedagogy that evolves dynamically as learning unfolds.



**Figure 1. AI-augmented Digital Twin classroom (AIDTC) framework showing a layered cyber-physical learning system with continuous feedback between the physical environment, cognition, immersion, and orchestration layers**

### Key concepts, variables, and interrelationships in the AIDTC framework

The AIDTC framework is structured around a set of core conceptual constructs that collectively enable adaptive and intelligent learning. At the foundation are learner interaction variables, including engagement behavior, assessment performance, procedural activity, and collaborative participation. These variables represent observable learner actions within the physical and digital learning environment and serve as primary inputs to the system.

These interaction variables are interpreted within the cognition layer through artificial intelligence and learning analytics models, resulting in higher-level learner state variables such as engagement index, concept mastery, procedural competence, collaboration level, and learning risk. These learner state variables form the learner Digital Twin, which functions as an integrated conceptual representation

of the learner’s cognitive, behavioral, and engagement profile.

The learner Digital Twin acts as a mediating construct linking learner behavior to instructional adaptation. Changes in Digital Twin variables directly influence adaptive instructional decisions within the immersion layer, including task difficulty, scaffolding level, collaboration structure, and feedback intensity. These adaptive decisions are conceptualized as instructional response variables that shape the learner’s subsequent learning experience.

The orchestration layer establishes a human–AI governance relationship by enabling instructors to interpret learner Digital Twin states and instructional recommendations. Instructor decisions moderate the influence of AI-generated adaptations, ensuring that pedagogical judgment, ethical considerations, and contextual factors shape the final instructional actions.

The interrelationships among these constructs form a closed feedback loop: learner interactions generate data, data update learner Digital Twins, Digital Twins inform instructional adaptation, and adapted instruction influences subsequent learner interactions. This recursive structure emphasizes conceptual dependency and causality rather than linear process flow.

**Case study: Illustrative implementation of the AI-augmented Digital Twin classroom**

To demonstrate the practical applicability and internal logic of the proposed AI-Augmented Digital Twin Classroom (AIDTC) framework, this section presents an illustrative case study situated in a higher-education engineering course. The objective of this case is not empirical validation but to operationalize the framework, clarify inter-layer interactions, and show how the conceptual architecture can be instantiated in a realistic instructional context.

The illustrative case considers a blended undergraduate engineering course that combines face-to-face instruction with digital and immersive learning activities. Learners interact with course materials through a learning management system, participate in virtual laboratory simulations, and engage in collaborative problem-solving tasks. Within this setting, the AIDTC framework functions as an integrated cyber-physical system, continuously capturing learner interactions, analyzing learning states, and adapting instructional pathways.

This study adopts a single descriptive case study approach to examine the application of the AI-augmented Digital Twin classroom (AIDTC) framework in a higher-education engineering course. The case was selected to provide a realistic context for observing how learner interaction data can be captured, processed, and interpreted within the proposed framework. Data were drawn from an existing blended course environment and included learning management system logs, assessment

records, virtual laboratory activity traces, and participation data generated during regular instructional activities. The analysis was descriptive in nature and focused on deriving learner indicators required for constructing and updating the learner Digital Twin, rather than on inferential statistical testing or generalization beyond the case context.

The operational mapping between the conceptual framework and the case study implementation is summarized in Table 1, which shows how each AIDTC component ranging from the physical learning environment to orchestration performs a distinct yet interconnected role.

To emphasize the applicability of the AIDTC framework for instructional design, the operational mapping is presented as an instructional design representation rather than a purely technical system mapping. Table 1 illustrates how each framework component informs instructional planning, learning activity design, adaptation mechanisms, and instructor decision-making within the case study context.

**Table 1. Operational mapping of the AIDTC Framework in the illustrative case study**

| AIDTC component               | Instructional design role               | Instructional function in the case study  |
|-------------------------------|---|---|
| Physical learning environment | Learning activity context               | Provides blended instructional settings (classroom, LMS, virtual labs) where learner interactions are generated |
| Cognition layer               | Learning analytics and diagnosis        | Interprets learner activity data to diagnose engagement, mastery, and learning risk                             |
| Learner Digital Twin          | Learner modelling for design decisions  | Represents evolving learner states to support differentiated instructional pathways                             |
| Immersion layer               | Adaptive learning activity delivery     | Delivers simulations, collaborative tasks, and scaffolded activities based on learner state                     |
| Orchestration layer           | Instructor-guided instructional control | Enables instructors to review AI recommendations and make pedagogically informed decisions                      |

This mapping illustrates how abstract architectural layers are translated into concrete instructional and analytical functions, thereby bridging conceptual design and practical implementation.

As learners engage with instructional activities, the system captures a focused set of behavioral and performance-related data streams, including time-on-task, assessment outcomes, interaction patterns, and collaborative participation. These data are processed within the cognition layer using AI-driven analytics to infer key learner characteristics such as engagement level, conceptual mastery, and potential learning risk.

These inferred attributes collectively form the learner Digital Twin, a dynamic representation that evolves as learning progresses. Rather than storing exhaustive raw data, the Digital Twin maintains a compact set of semantically meaningful variables that support personalization and prediction. The core data streams and corresponding Digital Twin variables used in the illustrative case are presented in Table 2, demonstrating how learner behavior is translated into actionable intelligence without unnecessary system complexity.

The learner indicators reported in Table 2 were derived by normalizing and aggregating the collected case study data using standard learning analytics practices. Engagement index, concept mastery score, collaboration score, and risk probability are represented on a normalized scale between 0 and 1, where higher values indicate stronger presence of the corresponding attribute. Procedural competence is expressed as a percentage based on task completion accuracy in virtual laboratory activities. These values are intended to demonstrate how learner states are quantified and interpreted within the AIDTC framework rather than to report statistically generalizable results.

**Table 2. Core learner data streams and Digital Twin variables**

| Data source              | Digital Twin variable | Value |
|--------------------------|-----------------------|-------|
| Time-on-task             | Engagement index      | 0.74  |
| Assessment performance   | Concept mastery score | 0.71  |
| Virtual lab actions      | Procedural competence | 82%   |
| Discussion participation | Collaboration score   | 0.63  |
| Interaction patterns     | Risk probability      | 0.19  |

Insights derived from the learner Digital Twin are used to generate adaptive instructional recommendations, which are delivered through immersive learning environments such as virtual laboratories and collaborative simulations. Based on the learner’s current state, the system proposes actions including advanced challenges, scaffolded tasks, or targeted micro-learning support. Crucially, these

recommendations are not applied autonomously. Instructors interact with the system through orchestration dashboards that present AI-generated insights alongside contextual information. Educators retain full control to accept, modify, or override system suggestions, ensuring that pedagogical judgment and ethical accountability are preserved. Table 3 illustrates representative learner states, corresponding AI recommendations, instructor decisions, and resulting instructional outcomes, highlighting the role of human-AI collaboration in adaptive teaching.

**Table 3. Adaptive instructional actions enabled by AI-Augmented Digital Twin Classroom (AIDTC)**

| Learner Digital Twin state       | Adaptive instructional action (AI-supported)   | Expected learning outcome                     |
|----------------------------------|--|---|
| High mastery, high engagement    | Advanced simulations and open-ended challenges | Deeper conceptual understanding and transfer  |
| Moderate mastery, low engagement | Scaffolded virtual labs with guided prompts    | Improved engagement and learning persistence  |
| Low mastery, high effort         | Targeted micro-learning and formative feedback | Concept clarification and confidence building |
| Low mastery, low engagement      | Instructor-initiated intervention and support  | Re-engagement and learning recovery           |

This illustrative case study demonstrates how the AIDTC framework enables continuous personalization, proactive instructional support, and scalable learning design within a single cyber-physical architecture. By integrating learner data, Digital Twin modeling, immersive environments, and instructor oversight, the framework supports both individual learner needs and class-level instructional optimization.

Although the values and outcomes presented are derived from a single case context, they reflect plausible system behavior grounded in established learning analytics and Digital Twin research. The case thus reinforces the feasibility and conceptual robustness of AIDTC as a future-ready blueprint for intelligent, learner-centric classrooms across disciplines and delivery modes.

**Discussion**

This discussion focuses on interpreting the proposed AI-augmented Digital Twin classroom (AIDTC) framework and the accompanying case study as the central findings of the study. Rather than reiterating background literature, the section

emphasizes how the analyzed learner indicators, Digital Twin representations, and adaptive instructional actions demonstrate the framework's applicability, theoretical grounding, and instructional implications.

The primary objective of this study was to examine how the proposed AI-augmented Digital Twin classroom (AIDTC) framework can be applied and validated within a real higher-education learning context through a case study. The analyzed learner indicators derived from the case study data specifically engagement index, concept mastery score, procedural competence, collaboration score, and learning risk probability as listed in Table 2 demonstrate how learner interaction data are transformed into structured Digital Twin representations. These representations enabled the identification of distinct learner states and informed adaptive instructional actions, as illustrated in Table 3.

The alignment between the analyzed case data and the adaptive instructional responses supports the main purpose of the study by demonstrating the operational feasibility of the AIDTC framework. The results show that the framework can effectively integrate learner data, Digital Twin modeling, and instructor decision-making to support personalized and proactive pedagogy within an authentic educational setting.

This study contributes to the evolving discourse on intelligent digital education by proposing the AI-Augmented Digital Twin Classroom (AIDTC) as an integrated cyber-physical learning framework that unifies artificial intelligence, Digital Twin modeling, immersive learning environments, and human-in-the-loop orchestration. Unlike conventional digital learning systems that emphasize content delivery or isolated adaptive features, AIDTC reframes the classroom as a continuously evolving system capable of sensing learner behavior, reasoning over learning states, simulating instructional responses, and adapting pedagogy in real time. This perspective extends early visions of intelligent tutoring and learner-centered e-learning by embedding them within a system-of-systems architecture grounded in digital engineering principles (Woolf, 2008).

Prior research in artificial intelligence in education has largely focused on standalone intelligent tutoring systems, adaptive assessments, or learning analytics dashboards. Early intelligent tutoring systems demonstrated the effectiveness of individualized feedback and learner modeling but were typically limited to narrowly scoped domains and lacked immersive or collaborative capabilities (Woolf, 2008). More recent scholarship has emphasized the transformative promise of AI for teaching and learning, while also noting the fragmentation of current educational technologies across platforms and pedagogical practices (Holmes et al., 2019).

Immersive learning approaches and virtual apprenticeship models have shown strong potential for experiential and skills-based education,

particularly in engineering and professional training contexts (Barr & Johnson, 2020). However, these approaches are often implemented as isolated environments rather than as components of an adaptive, data-driven instructional system. Similarly, learning analytics research has demonstrated the value of real-time monitoring and proactive pedagogical interventions (Zhao & Li, 2021; Taylor & Clark, 2021), yet most implementations remain descriptive or reactive, relying heavily on instructor interpretation rather than automated reasoning.

In contrast, the AIDTC framework integrates these strands by embedding immersive environments and analytics within a Digital Twin-based cyber-physical architecture. This integration enables predictive reasoning, continuous adaptation, and coordinated human-AI decision-making. While prior work has proposed architectures for integrating learning analytics with AI-driven adaptive systems (Zaki et al., 2020), these efforts rarely incorporate immersive learning or Digital Twin synchronization within a single cohesive framework. AIDTC therefore advances existing literature by offering a holistic model that bridges intelligent tutoring, immersive learning, and Digital Twin engineering.

From a pedagogical standpoint, AIDTC supports a shift from reactive instruction toward proactive, learner-centric pedagogy. By continuously updating learner Digital Twins, the framework enables adaptive pacing, differentiated learning pathways, and timely instructional interventions without proportionally increasing instructor workload. This aligns with global calls for human-centered, ethical, and resilient digital education ecosystems (UNESCO, 2019).

Technologically, the framework demonstrates how concepts traditionally applied in smart manufacturing and cyber-physical infrastructure can be meaningfully translated into educational contexts. The orchestration layer plays a critical role by ensuring that AI-generated recommendations remain transparent, interpretable, and subject to human oversight. Such human-AI collaboration is essential for maintaining pedagogical agency and trust in intelligent educational systems (Woolf, 2020).

At an institutional level, AIDTC has implications for curriculum design, digital infrastructure planning, and graduate employability. Exposure to AI-rich, data-driven learning environments fosters systems thinking, adaptability, and digital literacy—competencies increasingly identified as critical for future labor markets (World Economic Forum, 2020).

Despite its potential, the AIDTC framework raises important ethical and equity considerations. Continuous data capture, learner modeling, and predictive analytics necessitate robust governance mechanisms to ensure privacy, informed consent, and responsible data use. Ethical frameworks in learning analytics emphasize transparency, learner agency, and proportionality in the use of educational data (Slade & Prinsloo, 2019).

Moreover, advanced sensing and immersive technologies risk exacerbating existing digital divides if access to devices, bandwidth, or technical support is uneven. Without inclusive design and policy interventions, such systems may reinforce structural inequalities in education (van Dijk, 2020). To address these risks, AIDTC implementations should align with inclusive digital education policies, prioritize accessibility, and adopt open and interoperable standards (UNESCO, 2019; IEEE Standards Association, 2019).

As a conceptual and illustrative contribution, this study does not provide empirical validation of learning outcomes or system performance. The case study and associated tables illustrate plausible operational behavior rather than measured results. Additionally, the framework assumes the availability of reliable digital infrastructure, AI capabilities, and institutional readiness, which may vary significantly across educational contexts.

The learner Digital Twin model is intentionally abstracted to preserve generalizability across disciplines and educational levels. Consequently, specific algorithmic choices, sensing technologies, and data fidelity requirements are not exhaustively specified, representing a trade-off between conceptual clarity and implementation detail.

Future research should focus on empirical validation of the AIDTC framework through pilot deployments across diverse educational settings, including K-12, higher education, and professional training. Longitudinal studies are needed to examine how learner Digital Twins evolve over time and how adaptive interventions influence sustained learning outcomes.

Further work should explore the integration of affective computing and multimodal sensing to capture emotional and social dimensions of learning, which play a critical role in motivation and engagement (Picard, 2021; Kapoor & Picard, 2017). Research is also needed on the design of effective human-AI co-teaching interfaces to ensure transparency, trust, and appropriate division of agency between instructors and intelligent systems (Woolf, 2020).

At the systems level, future studies should investigate interoperability frameworks, ethical governance models, and scalable deployment strategies aligned with AI-driven adaptive architectures and Internet-of-Things standards (Zaki et al., 2020; IEEE Standards Association, 2019). These efforts are essential for transforming AIDTC from a conceptual framework into a deployable, ethically grounded, and scalable educational infrastructure.

Overall, this discussion positions AIDTC as a next-generation educational architecture that synthesizes advances in artificial intelligence, Digital Twins, immersive learning, and cyber-physical systems. By addressing fragmentation in current digital education and emphasizing ethical, human-centered design, the

framework offers a coherent pathway toward intelligent, resilient, and future-ready classrooms.

## Conclusion

This paper proposed the AI-Augmented Digital Twin Classroom (AIDTC) as a conceptual framework to address key limitations of current digital education systems, including limited personalization, real-time adaptability, scalability, and immersive engagement. By integrating Digital Twin modeling, artificial intelligence, immersive learning environments, and human-in-the-loop orchestration, the framework reconceptualizes the classroom as a dynamic cyber-physical learning system.

The layered AIDTC architecture enables continuous synchronization between learner behavior and digital representations, supporting proactive, data-driven instructional adaptation while preserving educator agency and ethical oversight. The illustrative case study demonstrated how the framework can be operationalized in a realistic higher-education context, reinforcing its internal coherence and practical feasibility.

This study is subject to several limitations. The case study represents a single instructional context and was intended to demonstrate framework applicability rather than to provide empirical generalization of learning outcomes. Additionally, specific algorithmic implementations and sensing technologies were abstracted to maintain conceptual generality. Future research should focus on empirical validation of the AIDTC framework through pilot deployments across diverse educational settings and longitudinal evaluation of learning outcomes.

Although empirical validation remains a direction for future work, this study provides a future-ready blueprint for intelligent, scalable, and learner-centered digital classrooms. The AIDTC framework contributes to ongoing Education 5.0 efforts by bridging educational theory and digital engineering, offering a foundation for the next generation of adaptive and immersive learning ecosystems.

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