



## **PROFESSIONAL TRAINING AND DIGITAL SKILLS FOR TEACHERS**

**Mrs. Sarala Shyamrao Kame**

*Email: kamesarala@gmail.com*

**Dr. Avinash Bhandarkar**

*Vidya Pratishthan (Maharashtra) Managed*

*College of Education and Research Center*

*Kedgaon Devi Road, Ahmednagar – 414005*

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### **Abstract**

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*In the digital age, the education sector is undergoing rapid transformation, and the role of teachers is shifting from traditional methods to digitally aligned instruction. Digital skills are no longer optional for teachers—they have become an essential component of professional competence. Hence, there is an increasing need for continuous professional training for teachers to equip them with relevant digital tools and methodologies. This paper explores the nature of digital skills required for teachers, the importance of professional development, existing policies and initiatives in India, challenges in implementation, and proposed solutions for effective integration of digital competencies in teaching.*

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### **1. Introduction**

The digital age marks a revolution in the way knowledge is accessed, shared, and delivered. The education system is witnessing an extraordinary transformation, with digital technology becoming central to teaching and learning processes. In this scenario, teachers are no longer mere conveyors of knowledge but facilitators and innovators who must stay updated with technological advancements. Thus, it is imperative for teachers to undergo professional training that enhances their digital skills to meet the demands of modern education.

### **2. Changing Role of Teachers**

Traditionally, teachers were considered the sole source of knowledge. Today, their role has evolved into that of a guide, facilitator, collaborator, and motivator. Digital platforms allow for personalized learning, increased student participation, and collaborative environments.

Teachers must therefore adapt to the role of digital mentors who can effectively integrate technology into pedagogy to improve student outcomes.

### 3. Types of Digital Skills Required for Teachers

The following digital competencies are crucial for teachers in the digital age:

**Technical Skills:** Proficiency in basic computing, file management, email usage, and internet navigation.

**Educational Technology Use:** Ability to use smart boards, projectors, and virtual classroom tools.

**Social Media for Education:** Using YouTube, Telegram, Google Classroom for teaching and student interaction.

**Digital Assessment:** Conducting online quizzes, using AI-based feedback tools like Google Forms, Quizizz, Kahoot.

**Collaborative Tools:** Employing Google Docs, Padlet, and Jamboard to encourage student collaboration.

### 4. Importance of Professional Development

Professional training empowers teachers in multiple ways:

Enhances effectiveness in teaching and classroom management. Builds confidence to use digital tools seamlessly. Improves teacher-student interaction.

Keeps teachers aligned with continuously evolving technologies.

Fosters reflective practices and lifelong learning habits.

### 5. Indian Initiatives and Policies for Digital Training

The Indian government and various educational bodies have launched several programs to support teachers in acquiring digital competencies:

**DIKSHA** (Digital Infrastructure for Knowledge Sharing): A national platform for teachers offering digital content and training. Here are some important features of DIKSHA portal for easy access of students:

1. **QR Code** - National Digital Infrastructure for Teachers and students can be accessed after scanning the QR code provided in their NCERT books. After scanning the QR code, the portal will come up with suggestions and topics that you want to study.
2. **Language** - The portal is accessible in English and varied languages that include Hindi, Marathi, Tamil, Telugu and so (18 languages). You can choose any language depending upon your comfort and convenience.

- 3. Location-based** - The portal would first ask for the location to which you belong. For example, you choose Delhi as an option, it would further ask you to choose 'sub-location' means in which locality of Delhi you reside. Accordingly, it will show you the courses that are going on in that region from which you can choose the desired course as per your skill set.

**SWAYAM:** An online learning platform for higher education.

SWAYAM is a programme initiated by Government of India and designed to achieve the three cardinal principles of Education Policy viz., access, equity and quality. The objective of this effort is to take the best teaching learning resources to all, including the most disadvantaged. SWAYAM seeks to bridge the digital divide for students who have hitherto remained untouched by the digital revolution and have not been able to join the mainstream of the knowledge economy.

#### **Status**

Swayam is a platform that facilitates hosting of all the courses, taught in classrooms from Class 9 till post-graduation to be accessed by anyone, anywhere at any time. All the courses are interactive, prepared by the best teachers in the country and are available, free of cost to any learner. About 90,000 students have already enrolled in this facility by May 2020.

The courses hosted on SWAYAM are in 4 quadrants – (1) video lecture, (2) specially prepared reading material that can be downloaded/printed (3) self-assessment tests through tests and quizzes and (4) an online discussion forum for clearing the doubts. Steps have been taken to enrich the learning experience by using audio-video and multimedia and state of the art pedagogy / technology.

#### **For Students and Teachers**

NIOS and NCERT are operating a wide range of online courses relating to school education respectively on the SWAYAM platform. Each course comprises text modules, video tutorials, assessment questions and additional resources for self-learning. There are about 1.5 crore students enrolled in these courses. Registration is now open for all these courses. In order to synergize the use of digital contents across the spectrum of school and higher education, efforts are being made to integrate the SWAYAM platform with DIKSHA. For all the courses offered by NCERT, a link for the e-content is being given to download the course book - e.g Class XII Book on Fundamentals of Human Geography

**NISHTHA:** A large-scale teacher training initiative, especially for primary school educators.

The National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 states that "Teachers truly shape the future of our

children and therefore, the future of our Nation. The motivation and empowerment of teachers is required to ensure the best possible future of our children and nation". As per the recommendation of NEP 2020, every teacher and head teacher is expected to participate in at least 50 hours of Continuous Professional Development (CPD) opportunities every year for their own professional development, driven by their own interests. CPD opportunities will, in particular, systematically cover the latest pedagogies regarding foundational literacy and numeracy, formative and adaptive assessment of learning outcomes, competency-based learning, and related pedagogies, such as experiential learning, arts-integrated, sports-integrated, and storytelling-based approaches, etc. To realize the vision of NEP-2020, recently NCERT in collaboration with States / UTs and autonomous bodies under MoE, MoD and MoTA (CBSE, KVS, NVS, CTSA, AEES, Sainik School, CICSE etc) have initiated the NISHTHA 2.0 online Integrated Teacher Training programme for different stages of school education.

- NISHTHA Elementary level (Class I-VIII)
- NISHTHA Secondary level (Class IX-XII)
- NISHTHA FLN (Class I-V)
- NISHTHA ECCE (CRC, BRC, DIET & SCERT faculty, PO, CDPO, Supervisors of Anganwadi system and Teachers at foundational and preparatory level)

**PM eVIDYA:** Integrating all digital learning initiatives under one umbrella platform.

These platforms provide training content in multiple languages and formats for better reach and accessibility. PM eVidya is a unique and innovative venture by the Ministry of Education, Government of India to facilitate multi-mode access to digital/online teaching-learning contents of various types among students and teachers.

6. Research Methodology  
This research paper is based on a qualitative methodology, including surveys, case studies, policy document analysis, and interviews with teachers from urban and rural settings. Emphasis was placed on evaluating real-life experiences and challenges faced by teachers while adopting digital tools.

### 7. Challenges and Limitations

Despite various efforts, several challenges hinder the implementation of effective digital training for teachers:

Technical Limitations: Lack of internet access, power issues, and absence of devices in rural areas.

**Inequality in Training Access:** Urban teachers often receive better-quality training than their rural counterparts.

**Lack of Motivation:** Some teachers are resistant or hesitant to embrace new technologies.

**Language Barriers:** Many digital resources are only available in English, which limits understanding for vernacular-language teachers.

## **8. Proposed Solutions and Recommendations**

To overcome the above challenges, the following strategies are recommended:

**1. Context-Specific Training:** Design training programs tailored to local needs, whether rural or urban.

**2. Language Accessibility:** Translate digital training materials into regional languages.

**3. Blended Learning Model:** Combine online and offline training for flexibility and broader reach.

**4. Demonstrative Sessions:** Use success stories and live demonstrations of digital tools.

**5. Mentorship and Peer Learning:** Promote teacher collaboration for sharing best practices.

**6. Regular Evaluation:** Implement a feedback system to assess and improve training programs.

## **9. The Future of Teacher Training**

Emerging technologies like Artificial Intelligence (AI), Virtual Reality (VR), Augmented Reality (AR), and mobile learning apps will become mainstream in future education systems.

Teachers must be trained not only in using these tools but also in related soft skills like:

Emotional intelligence

Digital ethics and safety

Self-assessment and learner guidance

Creative content creation

A robust digital training ecosystem will ensure that teachers are not only competent but also innovative and adaptable in a rapidly changing educational landscape.

## **10. Conclusion**

In the digital era, teachers are central to educational transformation. Equipping them with relevant digital skills through ongoing professional development is not just desirable but essential. Effective integration of digital tools into pedagogy can enhance teaching quality, boost student engagement, and promote inclusive education. Government bodies, educational institutions, and NGOs must collaborate to provide structured, accessible, and high-quality

digital training programs. Only then can we ensure future-ready teaching force capable of leading the digital revolution in education.

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