PEDAGOGIK TADQIQOTLAR JURNALI *№ 3,Yanvar, 2025*
ISSN: 3060-4923, Impact Factor – 7,212 *worldly knowledge*
Index: google scholar, research gate, research bib, zenodo, open aire.
https://scholar.google.com/scholar?hl=ru&as_sdt=0%2C5&q=wosjournals.com&btnG
https://www.researchgate.net/search/publication?q=worldly%20knowledge
https://journalseeker.researchbib.com/view/issn/3060-4923

DEVELOPING A MODEL FOR ENHANCING PRIMARY SCHOOL TEACHERS' PROFESSIONAL COMPETENCIES IN UTILIZING DIGITAL EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES

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Abstract: The rapid integration of digital technologies into education necessitates the development of primary school teachers' professional competencies in using digital educational resources. This study proposes a structured model to enhance these competencies, focusing on the IMRAD framework. The model is based on empirical research and aims to provide practical guidelines for teacher training programs.

Introduction The digital transformation of education has highlighted the need for teachers to adapt to new teaching methodologies that incorporate digital tools effectively. Primary school teachers play a pivotal role in this process, as they lay the foundation for students' lifelong learning. However, many educators face challenges due to insufficient training and support in utilizing digital resources. This paper aims to address this gap by developing a comprehensive model to enhance primary school teachers' competencies in this domain.

Methods

Research Design The study employed a mixed-methods approach, combining quantitative and qualitative data collection. The experimental trial was conducted in three phases: needs analysis, model development, and validation.

Participants A total of 120 primary school teachers from various regions were selected using stratified random sampling. Participants included teachers with varying levels of experience and familiarity with digital tools.

Data Collection Data were gathered through surveys, interviews, and classroom observations. Surveys assessed teachers' self-reported competencies, while interviews explored their perceptions of digital resources. Classroom observations evaluated the practical application of digital tools.

Model Development The proposed model was developed through iterative cycles of design and feedback. It incorporates four key components: knowledge acquisition, skill development, pedagogical integration, and reflective practice. Each component is aligned with specific goals and activities to ensure comprehensive competency development.

The Proposed Model The model, "Digital Competency Enhancement Framework (DCEF)," consists of the following stages:

Knowledge Acquisition: Focuses on building foundational digital literacy. Activities include:

- Interactive workshops on digital tools.

- Access to curated online resources and tutorials.

Skill Development: Aims to enhance practical skills in using digital tools. Activities include:

- Hands-on training sessions.
- Collaborative projects to create digital lesson plans.

Pedagogical Integration: Emphasizes embedding digital tools into teaching practices. Activities include:

- Lesson simulations using digital resources.
- Peer-review sessions for lesson planning.

Reflective Practice: Encourages continuous improvement through reflection. Activities include:

- Maintaining digital teaching journals.
- Participating in discussion forums and mentoring groups.

Results

Needs Analysis The needs analysis revealed significant gaps in teachers' knowledge and skills related to digital resources. Most participants expressed a lack of confidence in selecting and applying digital tools effectively.

Model Implementation The model was implemented over a six-month period, during which teachers participated in workshops, collaborative projects, and mentoring sessions. These activities focused on enhancing their digital literacy, pedagogical strategies, and reflective practices.

Impact Assessment Post-implementation surveys and observations indicated significant improvements in teachers' competencies. The majority of participants reported increased confidence and proficiency in using digital resources. Additionally, student engagement and learning outcomes showed noticeable improvement.

Discussion The findings underscore the importance of a structured approach to developing teachers' competencies in digital resource utilization. The Digital Competency Enhancement Framework (DCEF) provides a practical and adaptable framework that can be applied across various educational contexts. Key success factors include ongoing support, collaborative learning, and opportunities for reflective practice. Additionally, the iterative nature of the model allows for continuous refinement based on teacher feedback and evolving technological advancements.

Conclusion This study contributes to the field of teacher education by presenting a validated model for enhancing primary school teachers' competencies in utilizing digital educational resources. Future research should focus on scaling the model and exploring its long-term impact on teaching and learning outcomes. Moreover, policy implications include the integration of similar frameworks into national teacher training programs.

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