

Digitalization in Schools and Age-Inclusive Practices: Are Older Teachers Left Behind?

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Abstract

The rapid digital transformation in education, accelerated by global disruptions such as the COVID-19 pandemic, has highlighted disparities in digital adaptation among teachers of different age groups. While younger educators often exhibit greater ease with integrating digital tools into teaching practices, older teachers may encounter various barriers ranging from lack of training to psychological resistance and institutional support gaps. This study explores the extent to which age influences teachers' engagement with digital technologies in school environments and examines whether existing professional development models adequately address the diverse needs of a multi-generational teaching workforce.

Drawing on the conceptual framework of Work and Organizational Psychology (WOP) and Human Resource Management (HRM), the research adopts a mixed-methods approach. Quantitative data from surveys administered to teachers across age cohorts are complemented with qualitative interviews to uncover in-depth perceptions of digital inclusion and exclusion. Preliminary findings suggest a significant digital confidence gap between younger and older teachers, often exacerbated by age-insensitive institutional practices.

This research contributes to the literature by providing evidence-based insights into how educational institutions can adopt age-inclusive strategies to promote digital equity. It underscores the importance of designing tailored digital training programs, fostering peer mentoring systems, and embedding intergenerational collaboration into school cultures. Ultimately, ensuring that no teacher is left behind in the digital age is not only a matter of individual competency, but of systemic change in school leadership, policy, and professional development.

Keywords: Digital transformation; age diversity; teacher development; inclusive education; educational technology.