THE ROLE OF DIGITAL COMPETENCE IN SUPPORTING THE PROFESSIONAL WELL-BEING OF SURDOPEDAGOGUES

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Abstract Digital competence has become one of the most important requirements for teachers in modern education. In surdopedagogy, where specialists work with children with hearing impairments, digital competence is especially important because educational processes often involve assistive technologies, visual learning tools, online communication systems, subtitles, sign language applications, and interactive educational resources. The ability to use digital technologies effectively influences not only the quality of teaching but also the professional well-being of surdopedagogues. Teachers who possess strong digital skills feel more confident, experience less stress, and are more satisfied with their work. In contrast, a lack of digital competence may lead to anxiety, emotional burnout, professional dissatisfaction, and difficulties in communication with students. This article analyzes the role of digital competence in supporting the professional well-being of surdopedagogues. It examines the main components of digital competence, its positive impact on teachers' confidence and emotional state, and the challenges that arise when digital skills are insufficient.

Keywords: digital competence, surdopedagogy, teacher well-being, hearing impairment, assistive technologies, professional development, special education.

Introduction The rapid development of digital technologies has significantly changed the educational environment. Teachers are increasingly expected to use online platforms, digital devices, virtual classrooms, multimedia presentations, and educational applications in their work.

In surdopedagogy, digital competence is especially important because children with hearing impairments often need visual and assistive support. Teachers working with these students use hearing aids, cochlear implant support systems, speech-to-text tools, sign language resources, subtitles, and interactive learning applications.

Digital competence refers to the ability to use digital technologies effectively, safely, and critically in professional activities. It includes knowledge of digital tools, communication platforms, online teaching methods, information search, digital ethics, and data protection.

For surdopedagogues, digital competence is not only a professional requirement but also a factor that directly influences emotional and psychological well-being. Teachers who are able to use technologies confidently usually experience less stress and greater job satisfaction.

The purpose of this article is to analyze how digital competence supports the professional well-being of surdopedagogues.

Methods

This study is based on qualitative research methods and theoretical analysis.

The following methods were used:

1. Literature review of scientific articles and reports related to digital competence and teacher well-being;
2. Comparative analysis of different approaches to digital competence in special education;
3. Theoretical analysis of the relationship between digital competence and professional well-being;
4. Observation-based generalization of common challenges faced by surdopedagogues in the digital environment.

The study focused on identifying the main aspects of digital competence that influence surdopedagogues' emotional, psychological, and professional state.

Results

The analysis showed that digital competence has a strong impact on surdopedagogues' professional well-being.

1. Increased Professional Confidence

Surdopedagogues with high digital competence usually feel more confident in their work. They are able to use assistive technologies, online educational platforms, and interactive resources effectively.

They can work with:

a) Speech recognition software;
b) Hearing support devices;
c) Sign language videos;
d) Subtitles and captioning systems;
e) Interactive whiteboards;
f) Online communication platforms.

This confidence positively affects teachers' motivation and satisfaction.

2. Reduction of Stress and Anxiety

Teachers who know how to use digital technologies often experience less stress. They are less afraid of technical problems, online teaching situations, or digital assessment tools.

On the contrary, teachers with low digital competence may feel nervous and overwhelmed when they need to use unfamiliar software or digital platforms.

Therefore, digital competence can reduce anxiety and help teachers feel more comfortable in their professional activities.

3. Better Communication with Students

Digital competence allows surdopedagogues to communicate more effectively with students who have hearing impairments. Visual materials, subtitles, sign language resources, and online communication tools improve students' understanding.

When communication becomes easier and more effective, teachers experience greater emotional satisfaction and feel more successful in their work.

4. Improved Work Efficiency

Digital tools can help surdopedagogues save time and organize their work more effectively. Teachers can prepare lessons, assessments, and visual materials faster with the help of technology.

Digital platforms also make it easier to communicate with parents, store educational materials, and monitor students' progress.

This improved efficiency reduces workload and contributes to professional well-being.

5. Need for Continuous Professional Development

Although digital competence has many benefits, it requires continuous learning. Technologies change rapidly, and teachers need regular training to stay updated.

Professional development programs for surdopedagogues may include:

1. Training on assistive technologies;
2. Courses on digital teaching methods;
3. Workshops on speech recognition and subtitles;
4. Seminars on sign language technologies;
5. Online learning management systems.

Teachers who receive regular training are more likely to feel confident and professionally satisfied.

6. Challenges Related to Low Digital Competence

Lack of digital competence can create several problems for surdopedagogues.

These problems may include:

Fear of using technology;
Emotional stress;
Increased workload;
Difficulty communicating with students;
Low confidence in professional activities;
Professional burnout.

Therefore, insufficient digital competence can negatively affect teachers' emotional and psychological health.

Discussion

The findings of the study show that digital competence is one of the most important factors supporting the professional well-being of surdopedagogues.

Teachers who have strong digital skills are better prepared to meet the needs of children with hearing impairments. They can use assistive technologies more effectively, communicate more successfully, and create more engaging lessons.

At the same time, digital competence influences teachers' emotional state. When teachers feel capable and prepared, they experience less stress and greater professional satisfaction.

However, not all surdopedagogues have the same level of digital competence. Younger teachers may adapt more quickly to new technologies, while older teachers may need additional support.

Educational institutions should provide training programs, technical assistance, and access to modern digital tools. School leaders should encourage teachers to improve their digital competence and create supportive professional environments.

Without sufficient support, surdopedagogues may struggle to adapt to technological changes, which can negatively affect their professional well-being.

Conclusion

Digital competence plays an important role in supporting the professional well-being of surdopedagogues. It helps teachers feel more confident, reduces stress, improves communication with students, and increases work efficiency.

At the same time, low digital competence may lead to anxiety, emotional burnout, and professional dissatisfaction. Therefore, educational institutions should invest in teacher training, digital infrastructure, and professional support.

Supporting the digital competence of surdopedagogues is essential for improving both teacher well-being and the quality of education for children with hearing impairments.

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