

The teacher between tradition and innovation: Willingness to meet the needs of the digital generation

Research Article

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Abstract: In a society undergoing continuous transformation, marked by the rapid advancement of technology, education is the field in which all stakeholders must keep pace with change. This study explores how primary school teachers are willing to adapt their teaching styles, improve their instructional strategies, and innovate in order to meet the needs and expectations of today's generation of children – the digital natives. In this context, teachers are challenged to integrate interactive strategies, innovative methods, and digital technologies into the teaching and learning process, while still preserving traditional values and practices. As part of this investigative approach, a questionnaire was administered to teachers from both urban and rural areas. Additionally, a focus group session was held with primary education teachers from a school in Bucharest. The findings of the research highlight significant differences based on age, teaching experience, and both initial and ongoing professional training. While there is openness toward innovation, some concerns remain regarding excessive digitalization. The study emphasizes the importance of balancing tradition and innovation in the teaching process, as well as the need for training programs focused on developing digital competencies. The conclusions provide a basis for formulating recommendations to support teachers in adapting to the demands of contemporary education.

Keywords: Education • Innovation • Digitalization • Tradition • Strategies

1. Argument

Recent research studies on the topic of digitalization in education highlight that advanced technological progress has a major impact on the relationship between the traditional, conservative teacher and the demands of today's students. In recent years, many students have expressed the opinion that the current education system does not adequately prepare them for the challenges of contemporary society.

In the context of promoting a curriculum focused on practical skills, critical thinking, and digital literacy, students feel that the current educational system stifles their individuality and creativity, as a one-size-fits-all approach fails to meet their individual needs. Educational change requires a flexible approach that allows students to pursue their interests and passions,

encouraging independent thinking, innovation, self-expression, creativity, and personalized learning.

At the same time, today's students recognize the importance of technology in the modern world and believe that education should be designed with this reality in mind. The integration of digital tools in the classroom, as well as the use of interactive teaching methods, enhances learning experiences.

2. Theoretical presentation of concepts

2.1 The concept of innovation in education

Innovation in education is a complex concept that emerged from the need to adapt the educational system to social

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realities, as well as from the teacher's desire to improve instructional strategies in accordance with students' expectations and needs. Innovation in education implies a natural transition from traditional to modern approaches, with the aim of refining the educational system.

The pedagogue Sorin Cristea defines educational innovation as "a high-level, primary product of pedagogical creativity, validated by its originality and its confirmed relevance at the social level, within the scope of the educational system and process" (Cristea, 2013, p. 54).

The specialized literature provides various definitions of the concept of innovation in education, among which we mention:

- "a measurable, deliberate, and lasting improvement, unlikely to occur frequently" (Huberman, 1978, p. 15).
- "a deliberate activity aimed at introducing a novelty in a given context, and it is pedagogical because it seeks a substantial improvement in the training of pupils/students through a situation of interaction and interactivity" (Bécharde & Pelletier, 2004).
- a redesign of education "referring to structural innovations within the system," produced at the level of hierarchical relationships between educational stages, in the context of the school's openness to society (Vlăsceanu, 1979, p. 31).
- "a major deliberate change that aims to move from a present state to a projected one, triggering profound transformations" (Champy, 2005).

2.2 Factors that drive innovation in education

The main factors that contribute to the emergence of innovation in education are as follows:

- technological progress and the digitalization of society;
- changes in student profiles – the digital native generation; and
- societal pressure for an education system adapted to reality.

2.2.1 Technological progress and the digitalization of society

The way information is accessed and used today differs significantly from just a few years ago, due to the rapid technological advancements of recent times. The internet, digital educational platforms, and artificial intelligence have created a much more accessible framework for the teaching–learning–assessment process. All of these developments have led to a rethinking of traditional pedagogical practices, stimulating

innovation through the necessity of integrating technology as an essential resource in the educational process.

Teachers are challenged not only to use digital tools, but also to rethink the structure of lessons, methods of assessment, and their relationship to the content they teach.

2.2.2 Changing student profiles – the Digital Native Generation

Today's children are part of the digital native generation – children who have never known a world outside of the digitalized society. For them, interactivity, instant access to information, and multimedia are part of everyday life. It is therefore natural that these children often do not identify with the traditional teaching style of their teachers, as they have different expectations.

Among the current generation of students, we observe a strong desire for feedback, a preference for collaborative learning, and a need to apply theoretical knowledge in practical ways. In order to meet these needs, teachers must innovate in their educational approach by choosing interactive and innovative teaching strategies and adopting a flexible, student-centered perspective on education.

2.2.3 Societal pressure for an education system adapted to reality

Adapting the education system to everyday realities is a key objective for society as a whole. There is a growing expectation that schools should not serve solely as sources of theoretical knowledge. Instead, schools are expected to foster competencies such as critical thinking, creativity, digital literacy, collaboration, and citizenship education.

This societal pressure pushes teachers to adopt more modern, practical, and relevant teaching strategies and methods – ones that are closely aligned with real-life contexts. Through innovation, society can maintain its trust in the role and effectiveness of the educational system.

2.3 The Role of teachers in the innovation process

"All development passes through education: the values of science and technology, the inventive and applied spirit, new attitudes and mentalities, the way of being and becoming demanded by modern society are learned within educational systems and self-education" (Manolescu, 2023).

In the process of innovating education, one of the main roles belongs to teachers. For change, adaptation, and

innovation to occur, teachers must be willing. There are still many primary school teachers who are reluctant to change or do not want to adapt to new educational demands – those “old-style” teachers. Their teaching style often leads to student demotivation, as students today have different expectations from school, being part of the multimedia generation.

It is essential for teachers to understand that they play a very important role in this journey toward innovation in education. Change can begin with small things, with details in the classroom, and with the teacher’s own willingness to change.

3. Research on teachers’ willingness to respond to the needs of the digital generation

In the current social context, marked by accelerated digitalization in all fields, especially education, there is a need for research investigating teachers’ willingness to respond to the needs of the digital generation. Students from today’s generations exhibit a different way of learning compared to previous generations. They prefer quick access to information, collaborative learning, and interactive teaching–learning–assessment methods.

Such research is essential to understand the extent to which teachers are prepared to integrate digitalization into their teaching practices and adopt innovative methods. Additionally, this research can highlight the obstacles and limitations teachers face during the adaptation process, as well as the resources needed to develop an education system aligned with the real expectations and needs of contemporary students.

This investigative effort can contribute not only to the foundation of more effective educational policies but also to supporting continuous teacher training, aiming to reduce the gap between teaching and learning in the digital age.

3.1 Research aim and objectives

The aim of this research is to analyze the willingness of pre-university teachers, especially those in primary education, to adapt their teaching strategies to the demands of the digital generation by integrating technology and using innovative, interactive, and relevant methods tailored to the profile of contemporary students.

The objectives of this research are as follows:

1. To identify teachers’ perceptions regarding the characteristics of the digital generation and their learning needs.

2. To assess the extent to which digital resources and innovative methods are currently used in teaching activities.
3. To investigate the level of training and self-training of teachers in digital competencies and modern pedagogy.
4. To highlight factors that either facilitate or hinder teachers’ willingness to innovate in the context of the demands of digital education.

3.2 Research hypothesis

The research hypothesis is:

Teachers’ positive perception of the characteristics of the digital generation is positively associated with their willingness to integrate interactive methods and digital tools into the teaching–learning process.

3.3 Research methodology

For the qualitative research, we adopted a phenomenological approach, using the focus group method. This method was chosen because it involves obtaining information based on the interaction of participants’ opinions, which are related to the research topic established by the researcher. The advantage of this research technique is that responses can be stimulated by the group’s interaction and dynamics.

“The discussion is comfortable, even enjoyable for participants, as they share ideas and perceptions with one another. Group members influence each other by responding to ideas and comments expressed during the discussions” (Krueger & Casey, 2005).

For the quantitative research, a questionnaire was applied to collect data regarding the opinions, perceptions, and attitudes of primary school teachers about their willingness to adapt their teaching style to the profile of today’s generation of children in the context of profound digitalization.

3.4 Participants

In this research, primary school teachers from both urban and rural areas were sampled. Ethical standards were observed, with participants being informed about the purpose and objectives of the study and assured that their confidentiality would be maintained. They were also informed that they could withdraw from the sample at any time.

3.5 Focus group – analysis, processing, and interpretation

We organized a focus group meeting with primary school teachers from both urban and rural areas. Eight teachers participated. The meeting was held on the Zoom platform and lasted approximately 90 min, being recorded with the unanimous consent of the participants.

The moderator opened the focus group session, introduced themselves, presented the discussion topic, and briefly explained how the meeting would proceed. Then, participants gave short introductions, stating their position, years of experience, and workplace. Five questions were asked.

For the first question, *To what extent do you believe the current education system in Romania needs change/innovation to adapt to the demands of a digital society?*, the participants' responses were as follows:

- "I believe change is absolutely necessary. Our students think and learn differently, and traditional methods no longer yield results. The system is too rigid and doesn't keep pace with the digital reality."
- "A profound innovation is needed, not only at the level of methods but also mentality. The curriculum is outdated, and digitalization is used more as form than substance."
- "I think innovation is necessary but must be done with discernment. Not all children react positively to technology – some even get more distracted. We need balance."
- "The system needs to change, but teachers must also be supported. Many of us don't have access to resources or training. How can you innovate if you don't have the tools?"
- "Yes, innovation is needed, but not just technology. We need student-centered methods, project-based learning, real involvement."
- "Romanian school is too theoretical. Innovation should come through more applicability, interdisciplinarity, and digital tools that support active learning."
- "Yes, we must adapt, but I feel changes are often imposed chaotically. There should be a clear strategy and real consultation with teachers on the ground."
- "Students change, technology evolves, but the system stays still. We need a school that prepares them for the future, not for the past."

The responses reflect a generally favorable perception of innovation, with critical remarks regarding the current limitations of the Romanian educational system. Most participants believe that change is necessary and urgent, especially in the context of a digitalized society

and a generation of students different from previous ones. Teachers feel that traditional methods no longer meet current needs and call for a shift toward more flexible, practical, and student-centered models. They also emphasize that genuine innovation requires continuous training and institutional support so that technology is not just a superficial appearance of modernity. While supporting the idea of innovation, some participants draw attention to the risk of over-technologization and the lack of a coherent strategy, stressing that innovation must be adapted to the concrete classroom context.

To the second question, *Do you agree with the statement that interactive teaching strategies and advanced digitalization are positive aspects that complement learning?*, the responses were as follows:

- "Yes, I completely agree. Students are much more engaged when we use interactive methods and digital resources – they capture their attention and stimulate active participation."
- "I think yes, but they must be used with discernment. Not every digital application means effective learning. Content quality remains essential."
- "I agree, especially since today's students are digital natives. Interactive methods and digital tools help them learn in a way closer to their lifestyle."
- "In principle yes, but it depends greatly on the context in which they are used. For example, in lower grades, direct human interaction is still very important."
- "Yes, if they are well integrated into the lesson. It is not enough to use technology just for the sake of novelty – it must be correlated with educational objectives."
- "I totally agree. I have noticed that students collaborate better, communicate more effectively, and are more motivated when we use interactive platforms."
- "Yes, but with some reservations. Some children already have excessive screen time at home. Sometimes I feel the need to balance digital tools with classic methods."
- "Yes, definitely. Interactive strategies and digitalization help them develop critical thinking, autonomy, and digital skills – essential things today."

Most participating teachers agree that interactive teaching strategies and advanced digitalization bring real benefits to the learning process, contributing to increased motivation, engagement, and learning efficiency, especially for students from the digital generation. Most respondents consider that interactive methods and technology support more authentic and relevant learning, adapted to the current learning style. Some teachers emphasize the conscious use correlated with lesson objectives – digitalization should not be

used mechanically or just for modernization's sake. The idea also arises that, especially at the primary level, it is important to balance digital and traditional methods to avoid neglecting the socio-emotional components of learning.

To the third question, *Do you use alternative, interactive teaching methods in your work with students?*, all focus group participants, both from urban and rural areas, stated that they frequently use alternative, interactive teaching methods such as individual and team projects, portfolios, the cluster method, gallery walk, thinking hats method, digital educational games, clock method, the Know/Want to Know/Learned method, cube method, discovery learning, starbursting, etc.

The responses highlight a high level of openness and applicability of interactive teaching methods in the current activity of teachers, regardless of their background (urban or rural). The mentioned methods – such as individual and group projects, portfolios, clusters, gallery walk, thinking hats, digital educational games, clock method, cube method, starbursting, or discovery learning – reflect didactic diversity and a genuine concern for adapting content to students' varied learning styles. Furthermore, the inclusion of digital tools suggests an active integration of technological resources into the educational process.

Regarding the same topic, two teachers mentioned that it is more difficult to use interactive teaching methods in lower grades, arguing that first, a learning foundation must be established for students, and only then can such modern teaching-learning-assessment methods be successfully employed. The rest of the participating teachers stated that interactive teaching strategies are both possible and necessary starting from the preparatory grade.

This difference of opinion reflects pedagogical nuances in adapting innovation according to the students' age and developmental level, but also shows a general consensus on the importance of interactive methods as a means to complement and improve the educational process. Additionally, their presence in both urban and rural settings shows that access to innovation does not depend exclusively on location but also on the initiative and professional training of the teacher.

To the fourth question, *How do you assess the quality of your preparation through initial training and continuous professional development programs for using digital resources as elements of innovation in teaching?*, the answers were as follows:

- "In initial training, I had very little contact with digital resources. Only in recent years, through continuous

training courses, have I started to understand how to integrate technology into lessons."

- "Initial training did not include any digital preparation at all. Everything I know, I learned self-taught or through online courses during the pandemic."
- "I attended continuous training courses that promised digital integration, but they were rather theoretical and not very practical. They did not help me much in practice."
- "I recently followed an accredited program that seemed useful – I learned about educational apps, assessment platforms, and interactive methods. It was the first practical training with concrete examples."
- "In continuous training, I had access to several relevant courses, but I feel there is a big difference between generations of teachers – younger ones are more comfortable with technology."
- "I did not feel sufficiently prepared either at university or afterward. I had to learn on my own, especially during the pandemic. The system did not provide timely training."
- "Training courses are useful only when they are interactive and adapted to real needs. Otherwise, they are just formalities, checked off for portfolios."
- "I had a good recent experience with a course that included the use of Canva, Wordwall, Kahoot – I even applied it in class. But there are too few such initiatives."

The participants' responses reveal a generally critical perception of the quality of initial training in the use of digital resources, which is considered inadequate, theoretical, or completely absent. Continuous training is appreciated as more adaptable and responsive to current needs, but with notable differences in quality and applicability. Most teachers declare that university education did not provide preparation in the digital field, creating a significant competency gap at the start of their careers. This lack became more evident during the pandemic when digital skills became essential. The answers suggest that continuous training is effective only when it is practical, applied, and connected to classroom reality. Courses that are purely theoretical, generalist, or poorly organized are perceived as inefficient and unproductive. Several participants emphasize that self-learning was essential for acquiring digital competencies, especially in the absence of coherent and sustained training programs. This reflects great pressure on personal initiative instead of a functional training system.

The last question was *Do you consider that through your teaching activity conducted in the classroom you can contribute to the innovation of instructional design? Please argue.*

In response to this question, the majority of participants believe that through their teaching activity in the classroom, everyone can contribute to the innovation of instructional design. Some answers were argued as follows:

- “Definitely, we can largely contribute to the innovation of instructional design because we are the primary agents in the teaching process. Therefore, if we pursue innovation, the teaching-learning process will have the same outcomes.”
- “Yes! In my opinion, a teacher contributes directly to the innovation of instructional design through the methods and teaching strategies used, by accessing digitalized resources, and through creative activities that spark children’s interest.”
- “Yes. Innovation in instructional design requires continuous search, involvement, creativity, and innovation – absolutely necessary attributes for an effective teacher!”
- “Yes. When we talk about innovation in the educational system, it concerns all active participants, especially teachers.”
- “Yes, at the classroom level, both by using modern methods and resources and by designing and implementing new methods and tools.”

However, there were also negative responses from some participants who do not consider that they can contribute to innovating instructional design:

- “No, I don’t have the necessary skills.”
- “No, we are not listened to, and whatever results later do not reflect anything substantial from what we proposed.”
- “No, I consider that what I could change is like a drop in the ocean, therefore something insignificant.”

The answers to this question reveal two distinct directions: on the one hand, most participants expressed their belief that they can contribute to the innovation of instructional design through their direct classroom activity. The arguments provided outline a clear and mature understanding of the teacher’s role as an agent of change in the educational process. This perspective shows a high level of professional awareness, initiative, and willingness to adapt to the current needs of students and the digitalized society.

On the other hand, a reserved or negative attitude emerged regarding the real possibility of teachers’ involvement in innovation: a small number of teachers expressed reservations about their capacity to produce significant change in instructional design. The reasons cited are relevant and indicate some systemic or personal limitations: lack of skills, low confidence in their own competencies, lack of appreciation of teachers’ proposals in the educational decision-making process, and a feeling

of helplessness in the face of a rigid system where isolated changes seem insignificant. These responses indicate demotivation related to the institutional context or a limited perception of one’s own influence, which can affect initiative and involvement in innovation processes.

The answers reflect a dominant positive trend, according to which innovation in instructional design is possible and necessary even at the classroom level through the direct involvement of teachers. However, there are also voices signaling real obstacles – whether personal (lack of confidence, lack of competencies) or systemic (lack of consultation, institutional rigidity).

In conclusion, the focus group discussions highlighted a significant openness among teachers toward innovation in education, especially in the context of accelerated digitalization and profound changes in students’ learning styles. Participants emphasized the urgent need to reform the Romanian educational system, citing both curricular rigidity and the insufficiency of initial and continuous digital training. It became clear that interactive methods and digital resources are perceived as beneficial and necessary, provided their use is balanced and correlated with educational objectives.

Some reserved attitudes emerged regarding the real possibility of innovation, either due to personal limitations or systemic constraints. Nevertheless, most participants believe they can actively contribute to transforming instructional design if supported by coherent educational policies, relevant training, and genuine appreciation of proposals coming from practice.

3.6 Questionnaire addressed to teachers – results, processing, interpretation

3.6.1 Questionnaire addressed to teachers

1. To what extent do you believe that the current education system in Romania needs change/innovation to adapt to the demands of a digitalized society?
2. To what extent do you consider that your role, as the main organizer of learning, contributes to improving the quality of the educational process?
3. Do you use digital resources in your classroom activities?
4. The following ways of organizing educational content are considered innovations in teaching activity. Do you agree with this statement?

- Interdisciplinary approach
- Integrated teaching of knowledge

- Modular organization
- Computer-assisted learning

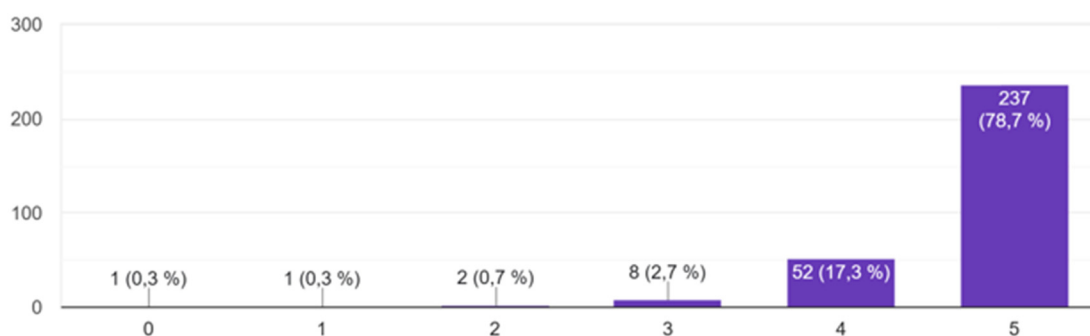
5. Do you agree with the statement that interactive teaching strategies and advanced digitalization represent positive aspects of complementing learning?

3.6.2 Interpretation of results

To what extent do you believe that the current education system in Romania needs change/innovation to adapt to the demands of a digitalized society?

1. În ce măsură credeți că sistemul de educație actual din România are nevoie de schimbare/inovare?

301 răspunsuri



6. Do you use alternative, interactive teaching methods in your work with students? If yes, please provide three examples of such methods that you successfully use in the classroom.
7. To what extent do you consider that alternative (complementary/modern) assessment methods such as portfolios and projects are compatible and relevant for evaluating student progress in primary school?
8. What is your opinion regarding the use of digital assessment?
9. How do you assess the quality of your training through initial and continuous professional development programs regarding the use of digital resources as elements of innovation in the teaching process?
10. Do you consider that through your teaching activity conducted in the classroom, you can contribute to innovating instructional design?

Approximately 300 responses were collected through the questionnaire from teachers in both urban and rural areas.

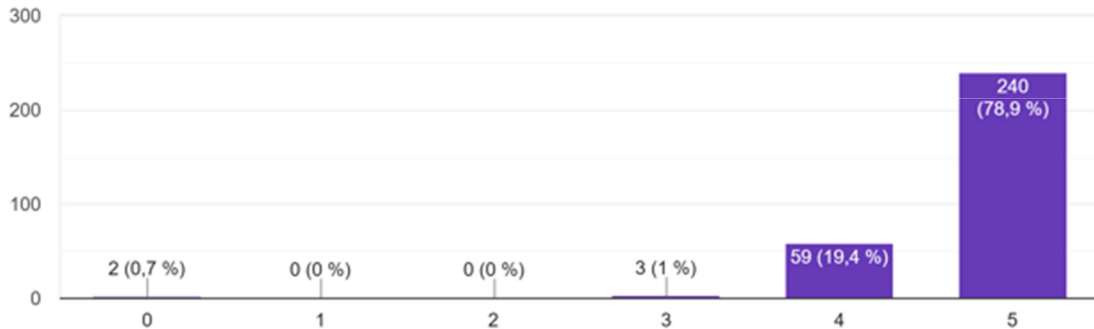
The responses were given on a scale from 1 (not at all) to 5 (to a very great extent).

An overwhelming majority calls for profound change, with 78.7% of respondents selecting level 5, indicating that nearly 4 out of 5 participants believe the need for change is very high. Together with those who chose level 4 (17.3%), this results in 96% of respondents perceiving the need for reform as significant or major. Low scores are almost nonexistent. This near-uniform distribution at the high end of the scale suggests widespread dissatisfaction. The graph clearly shows a positively skewed distribution, reflecting a unified collective opinion regarding the urgent need for intervention in the education system. This consensus indicates a crisis of confidence in the current education model, likely perceived as outdated, rigid, and inefficient in relation to the current needs of society and students.

To what extent do you consider that your role, as the main organizer of learning, contributes to improving the quality of the educational process?

2 În ce măsură considerați că rolul dvs, ca principal organizator al învățării, contribuie la creșterea calității actului educațional?

304 răspunsuri



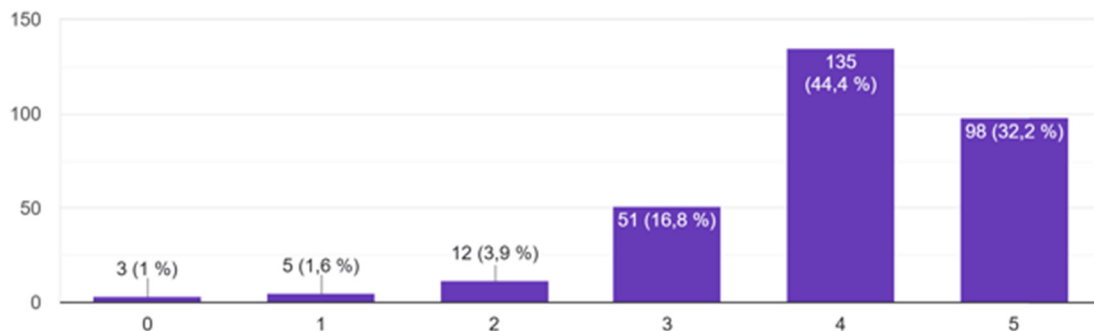
The responses reflect an extremely favorable and responsible perception among teachers regarding their own influence on the quality of education. An absolute majority recognizes a central and decisive role. 78.9% of respondents selected “to a very great extent,” and 19.4% chose “to a great extent.” Thus, a total of 98.3% of respondents consider their role essential for improving the quality of the educational process. This figure indicates a deep awareness of professional responsibility and the real impact that teachers have in effectively

organizing learning. The responses suggest that the overwhelming majority of teachers do not perceive the educational act as a passive process or one exclusively dependent on external factors, but rather as an activity in which their active pedagogical and organizational role is crucial. This attitude is a valuable indicator of a positive professional climate oriented toward self-efficacy and engagement.

Do you use digital resources in your classroom activities?

3. Utilizați în activitatea d-voastră de la clasă resurse digitale?

304 răspunsuri



From the analysis of the responses, we observe that the majority of respondents frequently use digital resources. 135 respondents (44.4%) chose level 4 – high usage, and 98 respondents (32.2%) chose level 5 – very high usage. Thus, 76.6% of respondents use digital resources frequently or very frequently. This indicates a high degree of technology

integration in teaching activities, suggesting openness to modern teaching methods; adaptation to the demands of digital generations; and appreciation of tools that can increase the attractiveness and efficiency of learning.

A small segment uses digital resources rarely or not at all. This minority can be attributed to factors such as: lack

of technical equipment in some schools; personal reluctance toward technology; and the need for additional professional training in the digital field. The average level (3) is represented by 16.8% of respondents. This category may include teachers who use digital resources occasionally, depending on the topic or context, as well as those in transition toward more intensive digitalization of the teaching process.

Consequently, the data indicate a clear trend toward the integration of digital resources in classroom activities, with most teachers being open and active in using educational technology. This is essential in a modern educational context, which requires adaptability, interactivity, and increased accessibility of content.

The following ways of organizing educational content are considered innovations in teaching activity. Do you agree with this statement?

- *Interdisciplinary approach*
- *Integrated teaching of knowledge*
- *Modular organization*
- *Computer-assisted learning*

integrating multiple subjects into a common approach is perceived as an important innovation.

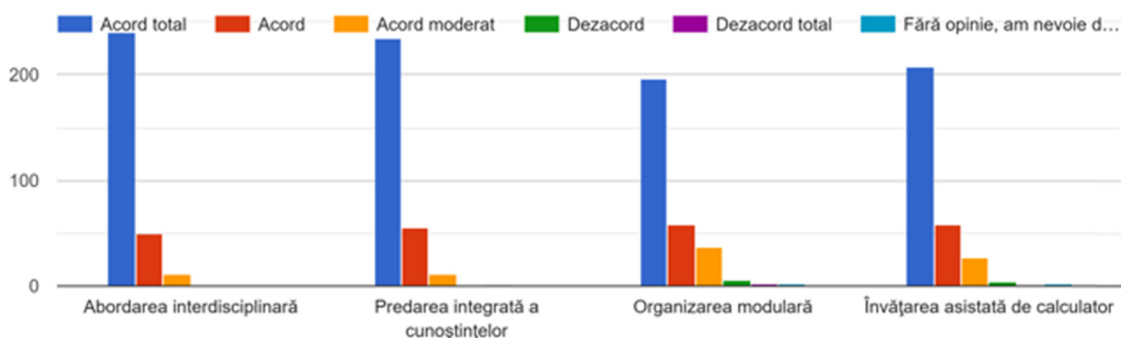
Concerning integrated teaching of knowledge, a similarly high number of “strongly agree” responses were recorded, comparable to the first category, indicating support for methods that leverage connections between fields to develop critical thinking and deep understanding.

As for modular organization, agreement remains predominant, reflecting a positive attitude toward flexible, competency-centered learning structures.

Although supported, computer-assisted learning seems to generate slightly more hesitation compared to the other methods. The number of “strongly agree” responses is somewhat lower. Possible reasons include: insufficient technical equipment in some schools; the need for teacher training in the use of ICT; and reservations about the long-term effectiveness of exclusive digitalization.

Therefore, all four methods are perceived as valuable innovations in teaching, with a special emphasis on integration and interdisciplinarity. These results reflect a clear orientation toward modernizing the educational process

4. Următoarele modalități de organizare a conținuturilor învățământului sunt considerate inovații ale activității didactice. Sunteți de acord cu această afirmație?



For all four mentioned categories, almost all respondents expressed agreement with the statement, indicating a general consensus regarding the innovative nature of these teaching practices.

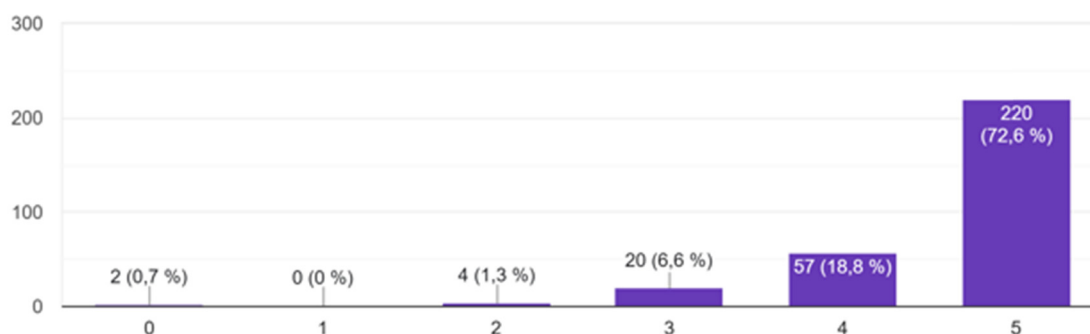
Regarding the interdisciplinary approach, over 200 respondents strongly agreed, supporting the idea that

and a willingness among teachers to adopt flexible, integrated, and technology-enhanced strategies to increase the efficiency of education.

Do you agree with the statement that interactive teaching strategies and advanced digitalization represent positive aspects of complementing learning?

5. Sunteți de acord cu afirmația că strategiile didactice interactive și digitalizarea avansată reprezintă aspecte pozitive ale completării învățării?

303 răspunsuri



The responses reflect strong support from teachers for the modernization of the educational process through interactive methods and technology; 72.6% of respondents believe that interactive teaching strategies and digitalization contribute very significantly to the learning process. Another 18.8% rated these methods as contributing to a great extent, which reinforces the positive trend. Only 6.6% indicated moderate agreement, and the percentage of those who do not support the statement is insignificant.

The data show a high level of acceptance and appreciation for modern teaching methods. Teachers appear to be favorable toward the integration of technology and interactive methods, indicating an orientation toward active, student-centered learning. The results suggest that digitalization is not perceived merely as a supportive element but as an essential component in updating and improving the efficiency of learning.

Teachers understand that interactivity and technology do not replace traditional learning but complement it, making it more engaging and better adapted to students' needs.

6. Do you use alternative, interactive teaching methods in your work with students? If you answer yes, please provide three examples of such methods that you successfully use in the classroom.

The answers to this question highlight that the majority of respondents answered "YES."

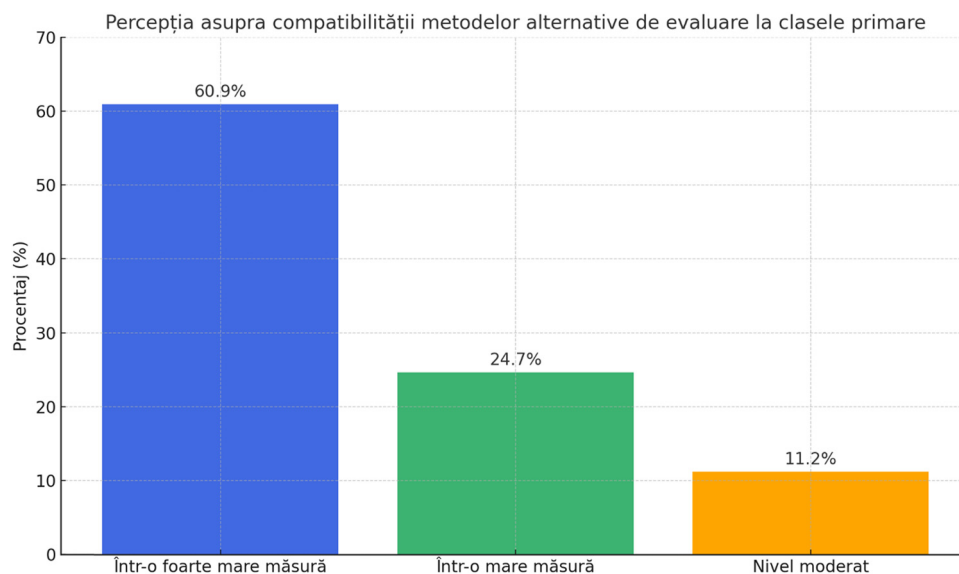
Teachers adopt alternative and interactive methods, reflecting a modern mindset adapted to students' needs. Only a few responses indicate limited use ("Not really, the students are too young"), but these are isolated cases.

The types of methods frequently mentioned by respondents include the following:

- Graphic methods and visual organizers: Lotus, Clusters, Concept Maps, Venn Diagrams, Quadrants.
- Cooperation- and interaction-centered methods: Role-playing, Brainstorming, Gallery Walk, Teamwork.
- Creative and reflective methods: Reflective Journal, Thinking Hats, Quintet.
- Alternative assessment methods: Portfolio, Self-assessment/Peer-assessment.
- Discovery learning and projects: Project work, Inquiry, Experiment, Thematic Expeditions.

Thus, respondents not only use interactive methods but also mention various specific strategies, demonstrating a rich and adaptable teaching repertoire. There is a clear trend toward personalized learning, tailored to the context and grade level. Responses also include digital resources such as PPT presentations, videos, interactive apps, Wordwall, etc. Many of the methods used foster critical thinking, collaboration, reflection, and autonomy.

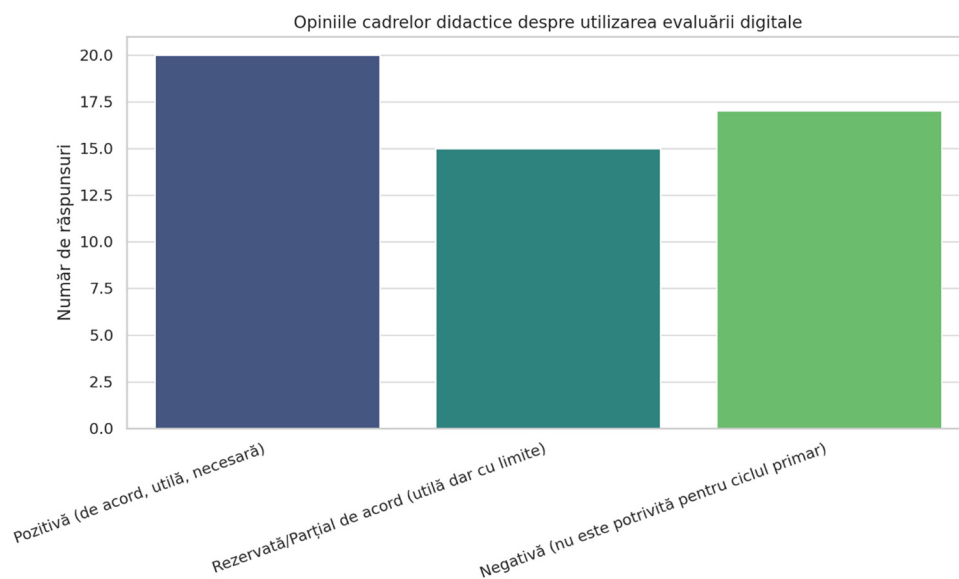
7. To what extent do you consider that alternative (complementary/modern) assessment methods, such as portfolios and projects, are compatible and relevant for evaluating the progress of students in primary grades?



The histogram shows that a clear majority of respondents (60.9%) consider that alternative assessment methods – such as portfolios and projects – are to a very large extent compatible and relevant for evaluating the progress of students in primary grades. Another 24.7% consider them compatible to a large extent, while only 11.2% indicate a moderate level of compatibility. Nearly 86% of participants (60.9% + 24.7%) support the use of these methods, suggesting broad recognition of their benefits in assessing the progress of young students. Portfolios and projects are perceived as tools that promote process-

oriented, individualized assessment focused on competencies and reflection. The percentage of those expressing reservations (moderate level) is relatively small, which may indicate either a lack of confidence or insufficient training in applying these methods. Therefore, there is evident openness among teachers towards modern methods that complement traditional assessment, representing a possible future direction for reforming evaluation in primary education.

8. *What is your opinion regarding the use of digital assessment?*



The histogram highlights the distribution of teachers' opinions regarding digital assessment in primary education:

- Positive – A significant number of teachers consider digital assessment to be “necessary,” “useful,” “good,” or “very good.” Many noted its objective and quick nature, as well as its alignment with the needs of the current generation of students.
- Reserved/Partially Agree – These teachers see the potential of digital assessment, but with reservations. They mention its limitations, such as being applicable only in combination with traditional methods, difficulty adapting it to very young students, and the lack of technical infrastructure in schools.
- Negative – Nearly one-third of respondents express clear opposition, considering digital assessment unsuitable for primary education. Arguments include its lack of relevance to the developmental level of young students, the impossibility of digitizing certain competencies, and a preference for a physical, traditional environment.

Although some perceive digital assessment as a modern and efficient solution, many consider it limited or even inappropriate for primary education. There is a clear need for balance between digital and traditional methods, and its introduction should be done cautiously, depending on age, skills, and infrastructure.

How do you assess the quality of your training through initial and continuous professional development programs regarding the use of digital resources as elements of innovation in the teaching process?

The analysis of responses to the question regarding the quality of training through initial and continuous professional development programs, in relation to the use of digital resources as elements of innovation in instructional design, reveals predominantly positive perceptions, especially concerning initial training. The majority of respondents rated this stage of training as “very good” or “good,” suggesting that the integration of digital resources within initial programs is effective and well-received.

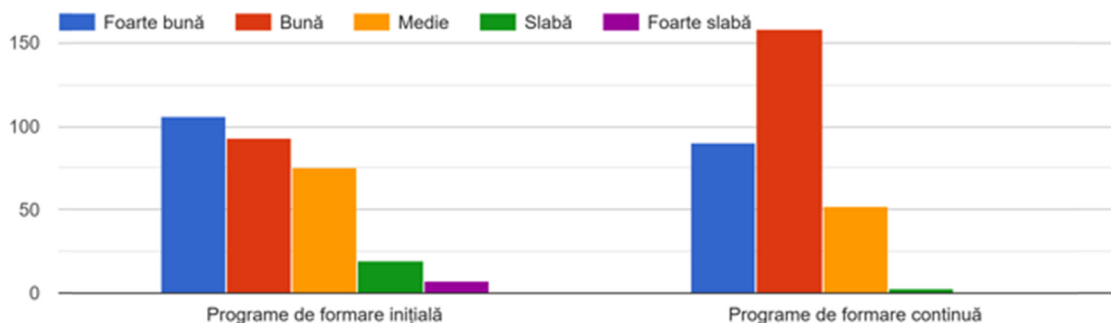
In contrast, although continuous professional development programs are also generally evaluated positively, the proportion of those who consider them “very good” is lower, with the “good” category receiving the highest number of responses. This discrepancy indicates that continuous training does not always reflect the latest digital innovations and does not fully meet the current needs of teachers.

Thus, there emerges a need to review continuous professional development programs to increase their relevance and effectiveness within the context of digital education.

10. Do you consider that through your teaching activity conducted in the classroom you can contribute to the innovation of instructional design?

Type of Response	Approximate Number of Teachers	Representative Example
Yes, with confidence	~140	“Yes! By accessing sources. we can research the

9. Cum apreciați calitatea pregătirii dvs. prin programele de formare inițială și formare continuă în vederea utilizării resurselor digitale ca elemente de inovare a designului instrucional?



Yes, but with reservations/ with support	~125	methods used in other systems.” “Yes. However, training courses and support in implementation are needed.”
Don’t know/ Uncertain/No clear opinion	~20	“I don’t know.”/ “No opinion.”
No/I do not consider myself capable	~7	“No, I do not believe I have such skills.”

The majority believe that classroom activity allows for innovation, especially in modern teaching and assessment methods; integration of digital resources; adapting to the needs of the new generation; and applying knowledge to real life. A large segment supports the idea that innovation cannot be effectively achieved without: Specialized courses, support from the ministry, and updating teachers’ digital skills. Innovation depends on each individual teacher. Many see the teacher as the “core” of innovation: “Dedicated teacher = innovative teacher”; “If not the teacher, then who?”; “Innovation comes from the classroom, from the bottom up.”

Some teachers mention difficulties such as a lack of technological resources (tablets, internet); insufficient budgets; lack of time to prepare innovative lessons.

The general perception is predominantly positive: primary education teachers see themselves as key players in innovating instructional design, possessing ideas, motivation, and initiative. However, there is also a clear need for systemic support – professional training, digital resources, and institutional backing – without which many of these initiatives risk remaining informal or being difficult to implement.

4. Conclusions

The research provides a clear picture of the challenges and opportunities faced by primary school teachers in the context of a deeply digitalized society.

The results, based on both quantitative methods (questionnaires) and qualitative methods (focus groups), highlight a significant openness among teachers toward innovation, as well as a series of reservations and difficulties that need to be addressed through coherent educational policies and genuine institutional support.

Most teachers recognize the urgent need for change in the Romanian educational system, which is perceived as rigid, theoretical, and poorly adapted to the realities of students from the digital generation. Teachers appreciate the benefits of interactive teaching strategies and digital resources, which they already use in their work, but emphasize that technology integration must be done with discernment and balance, especially in primary education, where direct human interaction remains essential.

A sensitive point identified in the research concerns the quality of professional training, both initial and ongoing. Many teachers feel inadequately prepared for the challenges of digital education, and ongoing training is often too theoretical and disconnected from the real needs of the classroom. Thus, there is a pressing need to reform these programs toward applied, interactive, and relevant training.

On the other hand, the responses demonstrate a high level of professional responsibility and awareness of their role in the educational transformation process. Teachers see themselves as agents of change, aware that through their work they can contribute to innovating instructional design, provided they are supported with resources, training, and institutional recognition.

In conclusion, the research highlights a favorable climate for innovation in Romanian primary education, but also shows that this change cannot be achieved solely through the enthusiasm and individual effort of teachers. A systemic approach is necessary, including investments in digital training, equitable access to technology, curriculum restructuring, and real institutional support. Only in this way can Romanian schools effectively meet the needs of the digital generation and successfully balance traditional values with the demands of innovation.

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